Rich. BAXTER'S

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF

Christian's Infants.

Whether they should be entered in COVENANT With God by BAPTISM, and be Visible Members of His CHURCH, and have any Covenant-Right to *Pardon* and Salvation?

Or whether CHRIST, the Saviour of the World, hath shut all Mankind out of his Visible Kingdom, and Covenant-Rights and Hopes, 'till they come to Age? And whether he did so from the beginning of the world, or after his Incarnation?

Occasioned by the Importunity of Mr. *E. Hutchinson*, (and of Mr. *Danvers*, and Mr. *Tombes*,) who called him to this REVIEW in order to his RETRACTATION.

An Impartial Reading is humbly requested, of those Dissenters who would not be found Despisers of holy Truth, nor such as judge before they hear.

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BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

READER,

I *Once more ſhew the World, that it is in the power of other men, if God permit them, to hinder us from greater ſervice to the Church, by making things far leſs in themſelves, to become accidentally at that time more neceſſary? By which kind of Impediments in Contentious times, Satan fruſtrateth the better deſires and deſigns of many of the Servants of Chriſt, who would fain be better employed; yea, and uſeth herein the ſervice of ſuch men, as in other reſpects are none of his Servants. And thus, though* Scriptures *be our* General Rule, *the* Providence of God, *and the great* Ends *of all our life, are the Determiners of the Circumſtances of our Duties.*

The Cauſe of this REVIEW *is a Letter of one Mr.* E. Hutchinſon *ſent me, very large in conſiderable Oratory, to let me know his* Contempt *of my laſt (and former) Book of Baptiſm, and to humble me for the great ſin of abuſing the world with ſuch frivolous writings, which ſeem to do ſomething, but prove nothing, and leave Mr.* Danvers, *&c. unanſwered; ſo that it is an Anſwer that he would have: And he vehemently urgeth me to Repentance and Retractation of what I have written for Infants Church-*

membership, Covenant and Baptism; as did Mr. Tombes *more than once before him. Should I Print his Letter without his consent, perhaps he might take it for an injury; and if he would have it done, it's like he will do it himself. But because it refereth to a Printed Paper of Mr.* Danvers, *against me, called his* Third Reply, *which I never saw till his Letter informed me of it, I thought that it was more than himself whom he importuned me to satisfie.*

I have told him here truly, how little the meer difference about the outward Baptism of Infants doth abate my esteem and love of any Godly Peaceable men: Two sorts of Persons called Anabaptists I can live in as friendly concord with, as with most I hold Communion with: First, those that deny not the Covenant-Rights, and Church-Relation of the Infants of Believers, confessing them to be Holy; *but only think that their Baptism, being but the solemnization of their foregoing Covenant, and the publick Investiture of them in their Relation, may, as the Coronation of an Infant King, be deferred till they come to some understanding; of which minde were* Tertullian *and* Nazianzene. *Secondly, those that being in* doubt only *of the Sufficiency or Lawfulness of Infant-Baptism, do receive a second or a third Administration (as some Married by Justices lately, were married again by Ministers; and as Mr.* Humphrey *pleads for a second Ordination,*

espe-

especially if Hypothetically done) *to satisfie their doubting Consciences, and then live in peace, and orderly Communion afterwards with other Christians, as knowing that in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth, nor Uncircumsion, but a new Creature. I say none of these shall be more willing of loving Communion with others, than I shall be with them.*

But 1. *If men will deny and scorn our* Infant-Right *in the* Covenant *of* Grace, *and in* Christ, Pardon *and* Salvation; *and* Visible Church-Relation, *and will so far deny the* Kingdom and Grace of Christ, *as to maintain that he* excludeth all mankind from *any* Visible Right, or Hope of Salvation till Adult, *and hath given such Right no more to Christian's Children than to Heathens! And if they will make this Opinion the measure of their Communion, and will divide the Church, and Unchristen, or Unchurch all that are not as unthankful and injurious to Christ, and to the Holy Seed as themselves, it is not I that separate from these men, but they from me, and all sober Christians.*

And I will here add but these two or three Notes to the Reader; 1. *If he will peruse two short Disputations which I have lately published of* ORIGINAL SIN, (*the Primary and Secondary*) *he will see it fully proved, that both* Naturally, *and by* Supernatural Revelation *God hath declared such an* Interest of Parents and Chil-

dren in each other, *as is much of the Reason of all that I here plead for: And he that will accurately observe the whole current of the Scripture herein, shall find this* Conjunct-Interest *asserted from end to end.*

2. *I am past doubt that it is a principal design of Satan to* mortifie *our* Christendom *it self, by* keeping Parents from that intelligent and serious Covenanting with God, *in their solemn dedication of their Children to him, which the greatness of the work and case requireth; and to turn our very* Christening *into a Ceremony, or lifeless Formality: And it is not the least part of* my Non-conformity, *that I dare not deliberately profess* my Assent and Consent, *that* no Parent shall be suffered in the Church to enter his own Child into the Covenant of God, nor to speak one Covenanting, Promising, Undertaking, nor Dedicating word; (*nor must be* urged to be so much as present) *But that* God-fathers and Godmothers; *who never give us any cause to believe that one of many thousands of them take the* Child for their own, *nor ever purpose to* Educate him, *or do what* there they Vow and Covenant to do, *must be the* only Covenanting Undertakers; *and so that so much* notorious false Vowing to God, *or* Perfidiousness, *must defile our Baptism: And now come these Anabaptists, and instead of calling*

calling the Parents to Serioufneſs, *and* Holy Fidelity *in ſo great a work, they tell them that it is none of their Duty at all.*

3. *And how light ſoever ſome make of* Unity, *I know that it's even* Eſſential *to the* Church; *As the* Union *of the* Stones *and* Timber *is to the* Houſe, *and of* King *and* Subjects *to the* Kingdom; *and of the ſeveral* parts *to a Clock or Watch: For the* Form *is Relative. And do you think then that they befriend Chriſt or his Church, who turn the Sacrament of our Union into the occaſion of our great Diviſion? yea, and* Unchriſten and Unchurch all the Chriſtian World in Infancy; *yea, and a thouſand parts to one of the Chriſtian Church of the* Adult, *becauſe they are not Re-baptiſed at Age. Paſſion, and Prejudice, and Partiality (when men have eſpouſed the Intereſt of a Cauſe as the beſt and holyeſt in their eyes) may make men ſwallow ſuch things as theſe, and think that they ſerve God in reviling all that are againſt them. Were we agreed againſt Infants Covenant-Right, when ſhould we ever be agreed at what Age it is that they are to be received? and when a Childs Profeſſion were Valid? But he that thinketh that* 1. *All the Chriſtian World will ever Unite in the Renouncing of all Infants Covenant-Rights and Hopes.* 2. *Or that* without Unity, (*in the* Eſſentials) *or without* Love

and Peace *the Church of Christ is in a prosperous State, doth not judge as I do upon the most serious thoughts that I am able to exercise, and as I doubt not but I shall judge to the last breath, which is not like to be far off.*

TO

TO

Mr. *E. HUTCHINSON.*

SIR,

WHen I read you general Accuſation of my *Firey diſcouraging of Reproovers*, &c. I began to bethink me who they were in all my life time that had to my face reproved me, and been diſcouraged by any unthankful paſſionate returns of mine; and not remembring any one in my life, (unleſs you will call my Contradicting men in diſputation and Altercation in caſe of differences of Judgment by that name) I did read on, in expectation of fuller information, and I perceived that it was not *any verbal rejecting any reproof* of my *preſent Monitors*, that you meant, but my *publiſhed Writings* againſt thoſe called Anabaptiſts. I have long had far lowder calls than yours to *Review my Life and Writings*, and to judge of them as impartially as I can. Upon the *Review* I am Conſcious, 1. That I never *meddled at firſt with Mr.* Tombes, till he unavoidably conſtrained me, by ſending thoſe whom he had prevailed with to me, to tell me, that if *I would not anſwer him, they muſt lay their change ſo far on my refuſal to ſatisfie them.* We lived together till then, without any meddling with the difference by me.

2. I

2. I find that when he had (without my consent) published these Papers which I privately sent him, with his Answer, I gave not *a word of Reply* to them, till Mr. *Danvers* made it seem necessary to me, though it be above 20 years since they were written. Surely my *silence* was no *furious Contradiction*.

3. I find that when Mr. *Tombes* published them so long ago, and they have been in your own hands in Mr. *Tombes* his Book, neither you nor others till now that I know of, shewed me any such fury in them. And those that I have spoke with say, that there is no such thing, but that his Reply is passionate, (which I leave to others judgment that yet may read them in his Book together.)

4. I find that in 1659. when I endeavoured to perswade Mr. *Lambe* and Mr. *Allen* to *Christian Concord*, that I did not strive against their *Anabaptistry*, but only to satisfie them, that *holding that difference, they yet ought to satisfie themselves, in that which they took to be their Duty, and to hold loving Communion with the Churches and Christians of the other mind.* And when they had renounced their *Separation*, it was not I but their *own Light, Experince* and *Consideration* (by what other helps I know not) that made them Renounce their *Anabaptistry*.

5. When before that, there was a Treaty in *London* for the Reconciling of the *Presbyterians* & *Independents*, I did first at home to the Ministers of *Worcestershire*, mantain by a set Disputation, that it was our *Duty to seek Peace and Communion with the Anabaptists*; and after sent up the *Terms* of that *desired Concord* to *London*, to Mr. *Allen*, who at some Meetings for that purpose, told me the business went hopefully on, till the Confusions in 1659. disturbed and overthrew all.

6. I have above 20 years in Print and Pulpit frequently

quently told the Churches, that they are greatly beholden to Gods Providence in permitting the Anabaptists to call us so lowd to the serious consideration of of our *Baptism*; and that if those that were Baptized in Infancy be not brought to as *serious understanding*, and *resolved a renewing* of that *Covenant*, as if they *had never been Baptised before*, yea and pass not out of the state of Infant Church-membership into that of the Adult, by a *solemn transition* in *owning of their Covenant*, these Church Corruptions will be continued which are the Scandal and Temptation of the Anabaptists. And to that end I wrote a Treatise of *Confirmation*.

7. I have Printed in this last Book (recited by Mr. *Barret* in the end of his *Queres*) such an *Offer of Brotherly Concord* with the Anabaptists, (supposing our continued difference in that point) even the *very words* of such a Profession on which both parties may with mutual forbearance live in brotherly Love and Communion, as never any man did to me accuse either of Rigor, Unlawfulness, or Insufficiency to that end. And if you resolve that you will have *no Communion with any in the world*, but those that are of your *Opinion against Infant-Baptism*, your Communion will be narrower than mine, and such talk as this of yours is never like to draw me to your mind.

8. I have many years insisted more upon the terms (and improvement) of our *Baptismal Covenant*, as containing that very *Touch-stone*, or state of Evidence, by which both our *sincere Grace*, and our *right to Church-Communion* must be tryed, than any man that I know of; of which my *Family Book* is a full proof.

9. To the Reconciling of men herein, I have oft shewed, that *If our Childrens part in the Covenant of Grace upon their Parents dedication of them to God, and*

so

ſo their Church-memberſhip, were but yielded, the reſt (whether they ſhould actually be *Baptized with Water*) would be much leſs cauſe of our diſtance and alienation, than on both ſides it is uſually judged. Yea, if the Anabaptiſts would but ſay, [*I Dedicate this Child to God, as far as he hath given me power, and heartily deſire that God may be his Father, Chriſt his Saviour; and the Holy Ghoſt his Sanctifier:*] And did ever any of you prove *this to be a ſin?* And we are ready on our part to profeſs that [*Infant-Baptiſm will ſave none at age that conſent not to the ſame holy Covenant.*]

10. I have oft told the world that though the Ancient Churches denyed not their *Childrens part in the Covenant of Grace*, nor their *right to Pardon and Salvation*, and *Infant Church memberſhip* by that Covenant, yet the *Time* when Children themſelves ſhould be *ſolemnly Baptized*, was left in the Churches for above 200 years to every ones *free choice*; ſome (and the moſt Chriſtians) uſually Baptizing them *quickly*, and others thinking as *Tertullian*, that it would *bind them faſter* if they *ſtayed ſomewhat longer*; or, as *Nazianzene* thought, till they were *three or four years old*: even as one that hath *right to a Crown* in his *Infancy*, may have his *Coronation* performed either *then*, or *afterward*.

11. I have oft told the world that I would have this *liberty and moderation* again revived, and that I would have no Anabaptiſt perſecuted or excommunicated for that his Opinion.

12. I never perſecuted any of them, nor perſwaded any to do it; nor never endeavoured to hurt them, nor denyed them any good that I could do them; (though I told you truly that even they of Mr. *T*'s. Church that had ſeemed *my old Friends*, ſought my *life* or *ruine*, by way-laying a man that told them he carryed

ryed Letters of mine, violently taking them from him and carrying them up to *London* to the Council, to Sir *H. V.* &c.)

This is the *account* that my *Reviewing Conſcience* giveth me of *my dealing with the Anabaptiſts*, with whom to this day I ſtill plead for *Love and peaceable Communion* upon terms of mutual forbearance: And whether it be holy Patience and Humility that takes this for Fire and Fury, and cannot bear it, conſider.

But yet *Fury* and *Folly* you copiouſly exclaim againſt, and call me to Repent: I thank you unfeignedly for that *honeſt wholſome* word [*Repent*] whether well or ill applyed. But your many ſcornes at my *Repentings* ſcarce well agree with the invitation. Were I like to have Life and Leiſure for ſuch a work, I would reſolve to Review all my Writings juſt in the method that *Auſtin* did, and to tell the Readers what I diſlike in them; which having no reaſon to expect, I have ſo dealt already with thoſe that moſt needed it, and corrected others in the later Impreſſions. If you need no Repentance, and have written as much as I, and that without any fault, you have been happier than I. And yet I intend not to give over Writing, Preaching, Praying, praiſing God, or Conference with men, becauſe I cannot do any of them innocently, in a manner that needed no Repentance.

But upon the full peruſal of your Letter, I muſt ſay, I never had a more Wordy, Windy, Empty Invitation to Repentance, that I remember in my life. I looked ſtill when the *fault was told me*, and *ſome words* at leaſt named that were guilty of the *folly* or *firyneſs* mentioned; or ſome of my particular ſins proved, that I might be convinced: I looked to find ſome one *Argument* of my Books *confuted* and *proved vain*, or fallacious. But it renewed in me that grief and pity,

for

for the ſtrange diſeaſedneſs of ſuch Diſſenters, (which Mr. *Danvers* had before cauſed) to find ſuch abundance of Rhetorical Invectives, without one word of Proof: As if you had prevaricated, and had a deſign to have *kept me from Repentance*, by telling me I had no particulars to Repent of that you could ſhew.

What do all your Generals of [*no anſwer*] and *tergiverſation*, and abundance the like ſignifie, to any man of common ſenſe, unleſs this be the meaning of them, [*It is Mr.* Danvers *his Opinion and mine that you are fooliſh, fiery, injurious, frivolous, &c. Therefore you muſt Repent of this, though we ſay nothing that ſhould convince a reaſonable man.*]

But, *I muſt retract what I have written againſt Anabaptiſts*; for you invite me to it by a torrent of General Accuſations, and letting me know that Mr. *D.* and you do think me Hetorodox.] And juſt ſo doth Mr. *Pen* and the Quakers do alſo: And ſo do the Papiſts, and with as great confidence and Oratory perhaps as yours: And ſo do the accuſers of the Non-conformiſts in many Volumes: and ſo do many other Parties: And muſt I be therefore of all their minds? Or why more of *yours* than of *theirs*, if I have nothing from you but *confident Gnerals*, which *they* can ſay as well as *you?* Yea thus do the *Infidels* themſelves now uſe me, and muſt I therefore yield?

But *I have written* Fiercly *againſt Mr.* Danvers! 1. Did I *begin* with Mr. *D.* or he with me? 2. Have I ſaid any thing offenſive to him, beſides the detecting of his marvellous audacity in ſtrange heaps of *untruths* in matters of Fact? and his lamentable injury thereby to the Church of Chriſt?

Sir, I know you not, and ſhould I tell you what a Spirit in your ſelf, your copious outcryes, and extream *tenderneſs* of our *diſſent* and *contradiction* of you, ſhews,

ſhews, and how unlike to the voice of a ſheep of Chriſt it is to *cry ſo loud*, as if the knife were at your throat, when we do but *tell the Church* of your *Errours and Injuries* to the Truth, upon the *urgency* of your *reſtleſs importunity*: Should I tell you what *ſtrange Partiality* you ſhew in finding *Meekneſs*, *Truth*, and *Reaſon* in Mr. *Dawvers* his Books, and *Folly*, *Fire*, and *No-anſwer* in mine, I could not expect that you ſhould ever the more be convinced, or Repent, but rather take that alſo for Fiery, as taking me for an uncapable Monitor. But I deſire you only to ask the Opinion of the judicious and impartial herein; for *Repentance to your ſelf* ſhould be no odious thing. And whereas you tell me over and over what *all wiſe men* now *think*, and *ſay of me*, and of my *Writings*, am not I an unhappy man that *never met with one* of thoſe wiſe men, but your ſelf and ſuch profeſſed oppoſites (Anabaptiſts, Quakers, Papiſts, or ſuch like.)

But what if *I be fooliſh*, and you *be wiſe?* Cannot you ſuffer fools gladly, ſeeing you your ſelves are wiſe? And is your impatient and general Invectives, and your ſelf-juſtifying, an infallible proof of your great Wiſdome?

Brother, upon the deepeſt ſearch that I am able to make in above 20 years Conſideration, I am ſatisfied that you *heinouſly wrong* the *Mercy of God*, and the *Church*, and *true Believers*, and their *Seed*, by denying them that part in *Gods Covenant* and *Mercy*, which I have proved he hath ſtated on them in his Word: I am fully ſatisfied that God never had Church-Laws on earth, whether in innocency, or ſince the Fall, which extended not the priviledge of a Covenant and Church-ſtate to the Infants of the Church, if they had ſuch (on that ſuppoſition;) and that the Church *from the dayes of* Adam *till now* hath had Infants mem-

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bers by Gods appointment; and that *Christ so found them*, and *so continued them*; and that it was *then* a thing that *none did controvert*: I am satisfied fully, that all that are *Discipled* are by *command* to be *Baptized*; and that *Nations should be Discipled*, and *the Kingdoms of the world made the Kingdoms of Christ*; and Christ would have *gathered to his Church the whole Jerusalem, as the Hen gathereth her Chickens, and none were broken off but for unbelief, and therefore the Children of believing Jews were not broken off*; and that *we are graffed into the same Olive*: *I am satisfied that they that so hardly digested* the forbearance of *Circumcision*, would never have *silently past over the Unchurching of all the Infants, without one word of exception*; nor *Christ* have so far *countenanced the Excepters*, as to be *angry with those that would have forbid Children comeing to him, because of such is the Kingdom of Heaven*, nor the Scripture have talk'd so much of *Baptizing Houſholds*. I am not hardened enough to reject so plain a Text as, [*The unbelieving Husband is sanctified*, &c. *else were your Children unclean, but now they are holy.*] Nor in that one text to expound *Sanctifying* for *Lawful Marriage*, and *Holyness* for [*Legitimation*] when the words are never so taken else in the Bible, and *ma-many hundred times* in another sense: nor to say, that *all Pagans Children are holy if they be not Bastards*. I am satisfied that man must not teach God how to speak, but carefully enquire what he hath spoken; And if but one Text of Scripture acquaint us, directly or consequentially of his mind, we must be faithful in observing it: I believe that these are *your* thoughts as well as *mine*, and that you verily think that you hold close to the Scripture, and that I depart from it: But as I am as *willing* to understand it as you are, and at as hard a rate of cost or labour, so I well know that one

one *mistake* once deeply received, doth let in abundance more, and fights against all the light that would detect and shame it: And he that once accounteth *Falshood* to be *Truth*, will account the *Defenders of Truth* to be its *Enemies*. Otherwise how could you and such others bring your Consciences to wrest and wrangle against such abundance of plain Scripture Texts? Were it but *this one*, what could be plainer? What is wresting Scripture if this be not, to force a sense of *Holyness* and *Sanctification* upon *one Text*, which is never found else in any Text, and the contary, or different sense neer six hundred times; is this impartial dealing with Gods word? And do you think that *Paul* mentioneth that as a great and comfortable priviledge of Believers, which belongs to *Heathens* equally with them? Why do you not your selves still use that language then, and say, that *the Children of Infidels are holy*, when too many will scarce allow the title to *any Adult Christians* that are not of your Sect, much less to the *Children* of Christians, though dedicated by Baptism to God?

But being called by you to a *Review*, I am again remembred, that *our Saviour himself was a Church member in his Infancy*, even the chiefest, that is, the *Head*; Mr. *Tombes* confesseth it: Let not your opinions interest draw you to deny it, nor to call my assertion [*rotten dictating.*] If you should, I would ask of you, *at what age Christ began to be Christ*, and the *Churches Head*, as we ask the Socinians, *At what age he began to be God?* And if an Infant was capable of being the *Head*, *King*, *Priest*, and *Prophet Relatively*, though *yet* he had never *Ruled*, *Sacrificed*, *or Taught*, then there is nothing in the *Infant Age*, which maketh *it* uncapable of being *Members*, *Subjects*, and *Disciples* of Christ: And it is like that *Irenæus* was not deceived,

who ſaith that he *Sanctified the ſtate of Infancy* by being an *Infant*; and we have reaſon to judge, that he did thereby give us notice that the *Infant Age* is not unacceptable to him, nor uncapable of Church Relation.

Truly Sir, the ſerious thought of *Chriſts Infant Relation* is a very great confirmation of me againſt thoſe that exclude all mankind in their Infancy from the *Covenant* and *Church*; even as *Chriſts ordinary Communion* in the Synagogues and Temple, is an inſuperable argument with me againſt unlawful *Separations*.

And God himſelf calling *Infants his Servants*, who do no *actual ſervice*, Levit. 25. 41, 42. yea and calling them *Diſciples*, Acts 15. 10. prevaileth more with me, than the words of any one that ſhall ſay, They are uncapable of being *Servants*, or *Diſciples*. If the Infant-age did not render them uncapable of being *Subjects* of Chriſts Kingdom, and Members of his Church (Univerſal and Particular) *before Chriſts Incarnation*, it maketh them not *ſince* uncapable of the like or ſame Relations.

And why ſhould I ſuſpect ſuch incapacity? are not Infants members of *other Societies?* are they not members of *Families?* and may not a *Family* be *Sanctified* by dedication to God? are they not members of all the *Kingdoms* in the world? and is it not the common *light of Nature*, which teacheth all men ſo to eſteem them? are not Infants the *Kings Subjects?* and why may they not as well be *Chriſts Subjects* as the Kings? Have they not *Right of Inheritance and Honour*; even of *Crowns, Lordſhips*, and *Lands?* Do any Nations under Heaven *level all Children*, as if the Parents communicated neither good or evil to them? What reaſon then to ſuppoſe that Chriſt obliterateth even Natures Laws?

And if you deny not *Original Sin*, why ſhould you think that God is ſo *unproportionably* prone to *puniſh*, and

and *damn* more than to *pardon* and *ſave*; as that while *all Infants* are made *ſinful* and *miſerable* by their *Parents*, yet *not one* in the world ſhall have ſo much as a part in Chriſts meritorious Righteouſneſs, and the free grace and pardon of his Covenant, upon the *Parents dedication of him to God*, and *entering him by conſent into his Covenant*? Doth *ſin abound* ſo much *more than Grace*, as that *Condemnation is paſſed upon all Infants* for and by their *Parents ſin*, and the *free Covenant gift* doth not *pardon any ſin* to any *one Infant* in the world upon *any condition* which the Parent can perform (nor any other.)

You never yet by all your words (for all *words* are not *Light* and Proof) did convince me that it was *no Benefit to Infants before Chriſts Incarnation to be Covenant-members* of his Church (particular and Univerſal,) Nor that Chriſt came to deprive them all of that benefit: Mr. *Tombes* his pretenſes that it *is a Benefit to Chriſtians to have all their Infants put or kept out of the Church State and Mercies*, is ſo abſurd, againſt Nature, that I am aſham'd to ſay any more againſt it: If it be *our Benefit* to have *no Covenant-gift of Chriſt, Pardon and Life to our Children*, may you not next ſay, It is *our Benefit* to have them damn'd? And if it *were* ſo, Nature teacheth us to be loath to receive our Benefits by ſuch means; as one would be loath that a Phyſitian ſhould cure his Sickneſs by a draught of the heart blood of all his Children.

Sir, I could the eaſilyer bear with your *delay* of *external Baptiſm*, if you did not deny all Infants their *part in the Covenant of Life*. But when you dare not only *do that*, but reproach our aſſertion of Gods *Covenant-Grace* to them, as [*Abſurd and Heretical*] it is no *Fierceneſs* to ſay, that I will not follow you. Where there is no *Covenant* or *Promiſe* there is *no Hope*, which

we can call Divine; and if we have *no Hope* of the *Pardon* or Salvation of our Children upon any *Promiſe* of *God*, it is no Promiſe of *Mans* that can keep us from *Deſpair*. We may not then ſay as *David*, *I ſhall go to it*] any farther than to the Grave.

Nay do you not do worſe than *deprive* us of our *hopes*, even lay ſuch grounds as *deſtroy and exclude* them, by a ſentence of damnation? For God [*addeth to the Church ſuch as ſhall be ſaved.*] And if Infants be not added to the Church, are they not *excluded* from Salvation? For Chriſt *waſheth and ſanctifieth his Church*, & he is the *Saviour of his Body only*; And if they are not of his *Church or Body*, he waſheth them not, nor is their Saviour effectively. The ſame Text that ſaith, *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved*, ſaith, *He that believeth not ſhall be damned.*] And *He that believeth not is condemned already.*] If therefore you allow them no participation in their Parents Faith, but require *perſonal Belief* of them, as neceſſary to their Salvation, according to the *Promiſe*, you muſt alſo require the ſame of them to ſave them *from Damnation*, by the *Threatning*.

Did you but leave *Chriſtians* no more hope than you do *Pagans* and *Turks* of their *Childrens Pardon* and Salvation, I would not be ambitious of the Joy of your opinion; much leſs if you *poſitively condemn* them. And what do you leſs, if finding them *condemned* by the violated Covenant of Innocency, you totally exclude them from the *Remedying*, *Pardoning*, *and Saving Covenant*, and from *Chriſts Body* which he doth ſave.

If you ſay that they may be of his *inviſible Church*, *which is the ſaved Body*; I anſwer, 1. What they *may be*, tells us not *what they are*. If they be not ſo *much as viſible Members*, who can ſay that they are *inviſible ones*? 2. They are by *Nature viſible Members of the Kingdom of Satan*, and *Children of wrath*, and *viſibly* under the

Laws

Laws Condemnation: Therefore 'till we can prove them *visibly by grace translated* out of this ſtate of nature, their *viſible Condemnation* cannot be denyed.

And what a jumble make you, if you make a great part of Mankind to be at once *condemned viſible members* of the *Kingdom of the Devil*, and *inviſible ſaved members* of Chriſt? Men may be *viſibly Chriſtians*, (*Hypocrites*) and yet *inviſibly wicked*; but to be *viſibly condemned members* of the *Kingdome of Darkneſs*, and yet *inviſible members of Chriſt* is ſtrange to me; eſpecially conſidering that *Hypocrites* are *viſibly* what they *are not really*, and *inviſibly*, becauſe they falſely profeſs what they have not: But a *condemned Infant* doth not deceive men by diſſembling, but we *actually know* that as a child of *Adam*, he is a child of ſin and death: It is *truly ſo*. Therefore we muſt conclude that as Gods Word is true, *he continueth ſo*, till he be delivered by Grace. And the *Covenant of Grace* is the *Conveyance* of, and title to our gracious priviledges, as the *threatning* is of wrath.

Shall not all that are *judged*, be judged by *Gods Law?* (the Law which they were under?) And what *Law* ſhall Infants then be judged by? If they are under no *Covenant* of *Promiſe* that giveth them title to life, how can they have *title by it*, or be *judged by it?*

Are they *Juſtified* or not *Juſtified?* If *not Juſtified*, they are *condemned* certainly; and ſhall not be glorified; for it is the *Juſtified* that are *glorified*, Rom. 8. 30. But if they are *Juſtified*, either it is by ſome *Juſtifying Promiſe and Covenant*, or *without*: If *without*, 1. Do you not give hope alſo to all *Heathens* and *Wicked* men, that though they are *condemned* by the Law of Innocency, and not *juſtified* by any *Covenant of Grace*, yet they may be *juſtified without?* 2. And by what means is it? by *any* or *none?* If by *any*; by *what?* If

by *none*, how know you it? But if it be by any *Covenant-Grant* that they are juſtified, it muſt be by that of *Grace* which I am pleading for or none. For we will not now receive another Goſpel.

To talk therefore of *meer Election*, is nothing to any of this that I have ſaid. Election Juſtifieth not, nor diſſolveth the condemning Sentence of the Law. God judgeth not men meerly on the grounds of his unrevealed Election, but by his *Word*, which is the *Rule*. And were it otherwiſe if *unrevealed*, none can *prove it*, and therefore muſt not *affirm* it: And were it reveled that God *will ſave ſome* that he *promiſeth not to ſave*, nor giveth them any antecedent *right* to it; yet 1. No man could know by this, whether any one in *England* or Europe, or in the World in his age ſhall ſo be ſaved: nor whether it be many or few, or more than a dozen in the world. 2. And no one can know who any of theſe be? and ſo can have no notice of comfort for any of his own. 3. Nor that *Chriſtians* Infants ſhall be ſaved any more than the *Heathens*.

Theſe things, Sir, are not to be ſubmitted to by all Chriſtians, for fear leſt you elſe revile them, or leſt Mr. *T.* ſayes, *Their blood be on their own heads*. *Auſtin* is called *Durus Pater Infantum*, for too ſharp a cenſure on the unbaptized; (though many miſtake him.) But we ſhould be *harder*, did we leave all *viſibly condemned* without a *pardoning word*, or any *viſible remedy* and hope.

And truly me thinks you too much *honour the Kingdome of the Devil*, if you make it viſibly contain all the *Seed of the Woman*, even of the *Faithful*, till they come to age. It is *too great*, I will not feign it to be greater. Were all the *Circumciſed* Iſraelites, and all the *holy ſeed till Chriſt*, at once both in the *Church*, and in *Satans Kingdom*? If not, ſure it is not ſo now.

Sure

Sure I am that the Scripture tells us of a *larger Church*, and a *better Covenant*, and *Promises*, and *greater Salvation* under the Gospel; and do you bring it down to this, to give us *all up* to the *Devils visible Kingdom*, without any *visible Remedy*, till we *come to age?*

And he is scarce so *like* to prove a *member of Christ at age*, who is trained up in the *Kingdom of the Devil till then*, as he is that is educated in the *Houshold of God*. There is more of Gods blessing to be expected in his *own Family* than in the *Devils*.

Either it is a *Mercy* or *no Mercy* to be in *Christs Family* or Church? if none, why do *you* value it? if it *be*, why should we think that the Saviour of the world procureth it to *no Infants?* nay that he came to leave them out. Would you not take it for a Mercy if you believed that God in Scripture gave it, to all the Seed of the Faithful dedicated to him? I think you would.

For my part I believe that the *Seed of the Righteous is blessed*, Psal. 37. 26. and that the Children of Satan, and the condemned unjustified seed are not blessed: That *blessed are they whose sins and iniquities are forgiven and covered, and to whom the Lord imputeth not sin*, and that *this blessing cometh even on the uncircumcised*; But not on them who are *unpardoned*, and *condemned already*.

I hear many sad Mothers lamenting their dead Children, for fear lest they are damned: And though I never was a Father, I can perceive what the concerns and bowels of Parents are. But what would they do, if they were taught to believe, that no Infant ever in the world, had any justifying, pardoning Promise, nor visible Remedy, but all till age are under condemnation, by the undissolved Obligation of the Law.

The Antinomians of late years have attempted to

perſwade men, that *ſecret Election juſtifieth from Eternity*, and diſſolveth the Laws Obligation, (before it *did oblige*, even to *non-exiſtent Subjects*:) But few believe them, the Errour being ſufficiently laid open. And yet what other than this feigned Antinomian Juſtification do the Anabaptiſts allow to any Infants in the world? But the *Obligation* of a *Law* or *Covenant* to *puniſhment*, muſt according to Gods eſtabliſhed order, be diſſolved by a *Law* or *Covenant*, even by the *Pardoning Law of Grace*. No doubt but all elect perſons, before Regeneration are in the viſible Kingdom of the Devil, and heirs of hell, and under the condemnation of the Law, as undiſſolved, and they not pardoned: and is this the caſe of the beſt of Infants?

Had Infants Church-memberſhip been a meer *Jewiſh Ceremony*, or a meer piece of the *Moſaical Policie*, giving no right to *any ſpiritual benefits*, nor extended to *any other but the Jews*, we ſhould have judged of it as of the reſt: But I dare ſay that I have given full proof of the contrary in both my Books, not here to be recited; and have produced more than [*rotten dictates*] that from *Adams* dayes Infants were eſteemed as under the *Bleſſing* or the *Curſe*, as belonging to their Parents, & intereſted in their *actions* & *conditions*. Beſides that *any heathen* might have *brought in his children as Proſelites* into Church-memberſhip with the Jews; whereas now you allow not *ſo much* to *any Chriſtians*.

And it was before Circumciſion was inſtituted, that *Marriage* was regulated by God, that there might be [*a Seed of God*] Mal. 2. 15.] And I will not be ſo audacious, as to expound that title, of all the *Devils Children* that be not *Baſtards*.

But ſtill you ſay, *There is no Scripture, Preſident, or Precept for Infants Baptiſm.*]

Anſwer, 1. Abuſe not your ſelves and others: we are

are first to agree *Whether Infants may be Church members, and under the Covenant of Grace with their Parents?* And then we shall next consider, at *what age*, and in *what manner* they should be *solemnly invested*. Confound not differing Questions: the first must be first resolved. 2. There is no Scripture president for Baptizing any *Kings*; must none therefore be Baptized? 3. Scripture tells us not all that *was then done*, but all that *must* be done. 4. When Baptism was first instituted and practised, the *Parents* must first be *Converted and Baptized*. 5. Yet over and over the Baptizing of *Houshold*s is recorded. 6. Infants *Church-membership* was a thing that they were *before in profession of*, and no sort that ever I read of questioned it: Therefore what need Christ institute it anew, any more than to new make the Ten Commandments? 7. If it had ever been his meaning to *dispossess them all*, he would have told us so in some word of Scripture, or some mention sure had been made of it. 8. But certainly he told them that *he would have gathered Jerusalems Children to him*, which is the Nation that was before Gods Church. 9. And he took Children in his arms and blessed them, and was angry with those that kept them from him, and said, *Of such is the Kingdom of God.* 10. And how can we obey *Mark* 9. 36, 37. and receive Children in *Christs name, and as belonging to Christ*, if none do visibly belong to him?

2. But I answer fully, There is *a full Command for Infant Baptism* Mat. 28. 19. *Go ye Disciple me all Nations, Baptizing them.*

Where note, 1. That it is not the *effect* that is made their duty, but their *endeavour*; else the Apostles had sinned when the hearers believed not, and because all Nations were not Discipled.

Note that to be *Disciples* and to be *Christians*, Acts

11.

11. are made all one; and to be *Diſciples* and to be *Chriſtened*.

3. Note that it is not *here and there one*, but *Nations*, that they muſt endeavour to Diſciple: And as the Jews are called a *holy Nation*, ſo it is ſaid, *I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance*, Pſal. 2. and Iſa. 55. 8. Mal. 1. 10, 11, *&c.* the Converſion of the Nations and Heathens is promiſed: and the *Word* and our *Experience* have both ſaid, *The Kingdoms of the World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Chriſt*. But *Kingdoms* and *Nations* contain Infants; and he Diſcipleth not a Nation that Diſcipleth no Infants in the Nation.

The Apoſtles were commanded to Diſciple whole Nations: the Infants are parts of whole Nations: therefore the Apoſtles were bound to endeavour to Diſciple Infants.

Object. *It is only the capable parts*: but *Infants and Ideots are not capable parts*.

Anſw. I have before [and elſe-where fully] proved *Infants capable parts*, as Chriſt was of being Head, and as Infants are of *Societies*, and of a part in *Covenants* with men: and *Ideots* having not the uſe of reaſon from the birth, are in the ſame caſe with Infants; and the Diſtracted, after at age, are nothing to our caſe, but are capable of being Diſtracted members; and Diſtraction is not Excommunication, nor Unchurcheth any.

Object. 2. *They muſt be made Diſciples by Teaching*.

Anſw. 1. If they be made Diſciples any way, they muſt be Baptized. 2. As a mans *hand* or *foot* doth not *underſtand* by *teaching*, and yet is *part of a Diſciple* that's made ſuch by teaching; ſo *Infants underſtand not*, and yet are *Infant Diſciples*, as being *naturally* ſo much

much *appertaining* to their Parents, that by Gods Law the *Parents Will* goeth for *theirs* in consenting for their good. They are *Subjects* before they *obey*, and *servants of God* before they serve him (as those were to *Abraham* that were born to him in his house,) and as Christ was a Priest before he Sacrificed, *&c.* And *so* they are *Disciples* before they *learn*; and made such by *that teaching* which *made their Parents such*, and taught them to dedicate them to God.

If the King should send Embassadours to perswade the Heathens in *New England* at once to *become Christians and his Subjects*; would any man doubt but when the Embassadours prevail with *all the Adult* to become the *Kings Subjects*, they do thereby make the *Nations*, and so *all Infants* as dependents on the Parents to be Subjects also? And if the *same speech* of the *same men* make the Parents both *Christians* and the *Kings Subjects*, may it not as truly be said that that speech made the *Infants Christians* (when the Parents consent) as Subjects when they consent?

3. If actual Learning or believing were necessary to the Christianity, or Church-membership of all, then whenever any one were Mad or Distracted, or in an Appoplexy (if not every night while he is asleep) he should cease to be a Christian and Church-member.

And if Infants as part of Nations must be made *Disciples*, and all that are *Discipled* be *Baptized*, (as the Investing act) then here is a plain command to Baptize Infants: All that must be Discipled must be Baptized: Infants must be Discipled: Therefore Infants must be Baptized: What have you more for Baptizing Kings?

And if men ask for Scripture *Presedent*, or fuller proof; 1. I also require them to give me any one Scripture Presedent, where ever any one that was the Child

Child of a Christian, and not at age when the Parents were made Christians, was afterward Baptized when he came to age? Prove that and you will prove something.

2. I ask them whether many points in Divinity be not now taken as necessary, or sure, for which not the fourth part so much is produced out of Scripture as I have done for the Church-membership of Infants.

And seeing you have so importunately called me to a Review; I will add these few things more, [I.] What Benefits I perceive cometh by Infant-Baptism. [II.] What hurt would come if you could prevail against it. [III.] What sin you would draw men to by rejecting it. [IV.] And I will tell you what thanks therefore I owe to God for preserving me from your mistakes and way.

1. And I cannot but think that all these following are Mercies not to be despised. 1. To be *Gods Children*, and God to be their God and Father. 2. To be Christs Members, and Christ to be their Head and Saviour. 3. To have the Holy Ghost in Covenant with them, to give them his Grace and help as shall be necessary to them upon the further terms on which it is by degrees to be communicated. (of which more anon.) 4. To have the pardon of all Original sin, as to the damning punishment, and so to have the Laws Condemnation disabled. 5. To be members of so holy, safe, and honourable a Society as the Church. 6. To have their Love and Prayers as Members. 7. To have Parents obliged solemnly to endeavour to educate and use their Children as members of Christ, fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houshold of God. 8. To have right to Heaven, so dying, by Gods gift. 9. For Parents and Friends to have comfortable notice of all this. 10. And that they are not under the power

power and Kingdom of the Devil, as those that are Rebels against the Covenant, or that are without.

II. Should your perswasions prevail against Infant-Baptism, these evils I think would follow. And whereas you say, that *your Think* is as good as *my Think*, pardon my modesty, and while you follow your own *Think*, give me and others leave to judge of *mine*, by the *evidence* at least of *probability* which I bring.

1. I think that Christian Parents would want one of their *Motives* to live in *Thankfulness* to God, and to magnifie the Grace of *the Redeemer*, if they did believe that all Infants are in the visible Kingdom of the Devil, and have no Promise or Covenant-Grant of Pardon, Remedy, or Life.

2. The want of this Demonstration of Divine Love would be a disadvantage to *their Love to God*: For where much is forgiven, there will be much Love.

3. It would deprive Christian Parents of all the forementioned Comforts for their Childrens good, and leave them to mourn for the dead as those that have no hopes, which any Promise of God alloweth them.

4. Parents would be more negligent in the pious education of their Children, than they are; for their solemn Vow and Promise is a great additional Obligation.

5. *Young Persons* would be more *bold in sin*, when they know that they are under no Covenant, Vow or Promise to the contrary: And they would usually *delay their Repentance and Baptism*; as *Constantine*, and many in those times did; as thinking that [all sin is done away when I Repent and am Baptized; but it is more dangerous to sin after Baptism than before: And so most would think it best to *live out of the Church*, and to *die in it*; to *live* as *Infidels*, and *die* as *Christians*;

to

to live after the flesh as do the wicked, and to be regenerate before death, and to die the death of the Righteous.

6. These delayes would do [as delay of Repentance now doth to many.] even drive away Gods Spirit, forfeit grace, harden the heart, so that few delayers would be converted.

7. By these delayings of Repentance and liberty of sins, wickedness would more abound, and so Gods judgments against the land be more increased.

8. Pagans and Infidels would be hardened and encouraged, by the multitudes of the unbaptized, and the paucity of Christians.

9. For Christians would be but few in comparison of the multitude: just as Mr. *Tombes* thinks Christ would have it, [*here one and there one.*]

10. And while some delayed their Baptism in *scruple*, (as many now do the Lords Supper) and others to take the *liberty of sinning* (which were like to be the common case of youth) and others in *senseless negligence*, the Baptized and Unbaptized would grow (like our Non-conformists and Conformists) into distinct Parties, upon distinct Intereſt in point of Reputation; and so the unbaptized become the Adversaries (for the most part) of the Baptized.

11. And the *Rich*, and the *Multitude* being usually the Unbaptized party, they would be still the strongest, and the *Governours* of the rest; and the Laws and Government would be such as the Governours.

12. And hereupon the Church would be (as before the dayes of *Constantine*) ordinarily under Persecution.

13. This Persecution would detein the most from looking towards Christianity, and so hinder multitudes from comeing in to Christ: and woe to them

that

that so offend or hinder such little ones; It were better a milstone were hanged about their necks and they were cast into the depth of the Sea.

14. There would then be no *sanctified Families* dedicated to God, (except those few that had no Children.)

15. Much less would *any Nation* be *Discipled*, or any *one Kingdom* be the *Kingdom of the Lord, and of his Christ*.

This is not the Condition that I desire and pray for: If you doubt of all or any of this, look to the *Easterni* parts of the world, and be not worse than those that will learn by nothing but experience. Judge whether under the *Turkish Government* the *Greek* Church be grown better, and whether the Christians are *more* and *holyer* than heretofore. And yet the *Turks* give *Liberty of Religion*, which most Unbaptized Princes do not.

O dreadful Case! That ever Religious persons should Study, Preach, Pray, and fervently Dispute and Write to bring the Christian world to this, as for the advancement of Religion!

III. To tell *you of sinning*, I suppose will be taken for *fiery fury*; or a Reproach of the Godly: But I may tell you why I am not of *your mind*, and what *sin* I think *I should be guilty of*, if I were.

1. God made it a duty for Parents solemnly to enter their Children, by Dedication, into the Covenant of God (as is oft proved.) And how will men answer the non-performance hereof any more than their not *Praying for them*, or *not feeding or Cloathing them*?

2. What a sin is it to *rob Christ of so great a part of his Church*?

3. What a sin so to deny the *Gospel Grace* and *Promise*, and to hide so much of the *Love of God*?

4. What

4. What a ſin ſo far to confound the ſtate of *Chriſtians* and *Pagans*, as to their Childrens bleſſing?

5. What a ſin ſo to *enlarge and honour the Devils Kingdom*, as to give him all mankind viſibly, till they come to age?

6. What a ſin to *rob Parents* of ſo much of their due comfort.

7. What a ſin to deprive ſo many millions of *Covenant-pardon*, *Grace* and *Life*, by hindering the acceptance and conſent?

8. What a ſin thus to *change* and *take from* the Word, yea from the very Covenant of God?

9. What a ſin to vilifie ſo great Mercy, as if it were none, and to preach ſuch ingratitude?

10. What a ſin ſo to diſhonour Chriſt, as if ſin abounded ſo much more than his Grace, as that all Infants being viſibly condemned, not one in the world is viſibly pardoned or juſtified?

11. Yea to make Chriſt ſo like Satan and contrary *to himſelf*, as to come into the world to caſt or keep all mankind in Infancy out of the Church and Covenat of Grace; And when his *Name is called Jeſus*, becauſe *he ſaveth his people from their ſins*, he will take none for *his people*, till age, nor *ſave* any Infant viſibly from ſin, either guilt or habit, and ſo be *no Jeſus* to any but the Adult, that we can know of: when yet before his comeing it was otherwiſe; And ſo to make the Goſpel much harder than the Law, and the yoak of Chriſt harder than the yoak of Cirumciſion.

12. Yea and to make the Goſpel Church more narrow and unhappy than all the Pagan Nations were before, whoſe Children might have been Proſelited with the Parents.

13. What a ſin is it to teach men to be thus unnatural, and cruel to their Off-ſpring?

14. What

14. What a sin to teach all that are not Re-baptized, that they break no Baptismal Vow or Covenant, nor sin against it, because they never were Baptized.

15. And is it nothing so to *cross our Prayers*, [*Let thy Kingdom come*] and to pray and endeavour that Christs Kingdom may not extend to any of mankind, till they actually at age believe.

But the great difficulty which it will be expected that I resolve, is, Whether I do not imply, That all the Children of true Christians dedicated to God, having saving Grace in their Infancy, many after fall from it, seing experience tells us, that too many prove ungodly.

I Answer, 1. So much of Scripture, and so great and many Mercies must not be all denyed, when a difficulty ariseth in the way, which we cannot at the present answer: Else what would become of most mens Christianity it self?

2. This was no difficulty to the antient Fathers, no not to *Augustin* and his followers, and so to all the known Church of Christ for a thousand years after the Apostles, who commonly held that even of the Adult, many fall from true Grace, Justification, and a state of Life; some appropriating perseverance to the *Elect*, (as *Austin*) and some to the *confirmed in Grace*, and some to both.

3. It is hard that they that cannot extricate themselves out of such difficulties, will but reproach those that offer them their help: But this is not the first time that I have ventured upon their Ingratitude: I speak of it still as a difficulty; but what I have said in my [*More Reasons for Infants Church-membership*] seemeth most probable to me, *viz.*

1. All Christians confess that *Adam* fell from a state of Salvation, or right to Life, at present.

2. *Adams* Grace which he loſt, was a *Power to Love God, and obey him*, which he could uſe or ſuſpend.

3. Beyond a meer *Power*, there is in the ſanctified by the in-dwelling Spirit of Adoption; *Gracious Habits* of Love and Obedience: What *Adam* had of this I am not here to determine.

4. Beyond meer weak *Habits*, there is in ſome, *ſuch Habits* as are *ſtrong*, *confirmed* and *radicated*.

(5. And in *Heaven* above all theſe, there is *full Perfection*.)

Now I apply this, 1. *Actual* and *Habitual*, *Love* and *Obedience*, is in the *ſanctified* Adult by the *in-dwelling* Spirit; For *Actual* Love and Obedience is *their Duty*, which the Habit is joyned to.

2. *Vocation* giveth *Faith and Repentance* in *Act*, with ſome *ſeminal diſpoſition* to the ſaid Acts and Habits of Love and Obedience, (as *Ameſius Medull. de Orat.*) not yet *Habits*; and this *Vocation* goeth before *Sanctification*, *Faith* being the Condition on which the Spirit of Adoption and Sanctification is promiſed.

3. So much Grace may be given to *Infants*, as was to *Adam*, as to *meer Power* to do what he did not, and as the Dominicans call *ſufficient*, or *neceſſary Grace*; and perhaps ſuch as is the *innitial* Diſpoſition before full Sanctification. And this much may qualifie them for preſent *Pardon* and *Juſtification*, For *Actual Love and Obedience* is not their Duty, and conſequently not the *proper habit*, beyond a *Power* and *ſeminal Diſpoſition*, as of neceſſity to their firſt ſtate of Grace: And as *Adam loſt this much*, ſo may they.

4. The *Sanctifying Spirit* of *Adoption*, is not promiſed to Infants to work ſuch *Acts* in them as they are not yet capable of, nor ſuch *Habits*, as in Gods uſual order follow ſuch Acts; But he is *Related* to them as their *Sanctifier*, becauſe Chriſt will ſend the Spirit as they

they come to the use of *Reason*, to help them in *holy Acts*, and so to *Habits*, if they forfeit not his help. Which some do (besides the perfidious neglect of Parents) and so lose that Infant-Grace.

5. But all *Gods Elect* shall certainly have more than this *Grace* of *sufficient*, *necessary*, losable *Power* and *Disposition*, and shall at age have actual Faith, Love, and Obedience if they live.

6. What ever Infant dyeth in the state of that *Grace* & *Disposition* (which we call *sufficient*, & in its nature was as loseable as *Adams*) shall be perfected in his access to the perfecting Glory (as all imperfect Saints are,) and is one of the Elect, and shall by Promise be saved: (allowing degrees of Glory:) If there be no need, or evidence of this solution, and you have any other surer way, then cast this by as [*rotten dictating*.]

Thus far I have given you an account of my Review: But yet I here repeat again "That if you "would be contented your selves, to satisfie your "own Consciences to be Re-baptized, (as one that "doubted whether he were well Married would se-"cure it by being Married over again) and would "afterward live peaceably in communion with your "Brethren, and not appropriate Church-communion "to your Sect. And if you would not deny our Infant "part in the Covenant of Grace, the promise of Par-"don, and life by Christ, and our Infant Church-mem-"bership, and only delayed the *Baptismal Investiture*, "as *Tertullian* desired, for the more solemn inaugura-"tion, and obligation; Though I should not be of "your mind, I should live in as loving forbearance "and Communion with you, as with other Christi-"ans.

But if when we are for Peace, you are for Church-Wars, and cannot differ from us without Dividing,

Unchurching, Unchriſtening, avoiding, and even Contemning or Slandering almoſt all the Chriſtians in this and former ages, in ſuch things I will have no Communion with you.

The Fathers likened *Re-ordaining*, and *Re-baptizing*. If any would ſatisfie his own Conſcience with being *ordained again* for ſurety, not Unchurching, Degrading, Avoiding, Reproaching, Perſecuting thoſe that are not of his mind, I would break no peace with ſuch a *Re-ordained* Perſon: But if the *Re-ordaining Sectaries* will ſay as you, *Our way only is right, we only are the true Miniſters* and *Churches*, and turn like to Donatiſts, I am not of their mind.

And I here profeſs, that while I tell you of my diſſent from *your Extream*, it implyeth no liking of the *contrary extream* of thoſe that would confound the *Chriſtians* & the *Heathens*, ſo far as equally to Baptiſe all their Children, if any Baptized perſon will but perfidiouſly promiſe that for them, which they never made any intelligent man believe that ever they intended to perform: Nor can I love the *Hypocritical Religion* of the *Phariſees*, which turneth almoſt all into Ceremony, as if they had to do with none but Children; nor the turning of *Catechiſing* and *Confirmation* into a *lifeleſs Formality*, to be inſtead of a *ſerious Profeſſion at age, of the Chriſtian Covenant, and a ſolemn intelligent tranſition to the Church Priviledges of the Adult*. I know that it is Satans game, firſt to draw Hypocrites to *mortifie* Gods Ordinances, and turn Religion into an *Image* or a *Carkaſs*; and thence to ſtir up others in ſeveral Sects, inſtead of *Reviving* them, to *Loath* and *Bury* them. Woe to the World becauſe of Offences, and Woe to them by whom they come.

Before I come to my *Fourth* Part, which is my *Application* to my ſelf, I muſt take notice of ſome more

of your *Applicatory* Letter in the way: And if I disorderly repeat some things, in following so disordered a Leader, you (at least, whatever others do) must take it patiently, it being far short of the tedious work which you seem to call for: You would have Mr. *Danvers* his Letter Answered, and you would have better Proof for Infant Baptism. It is not *in my power* to believe the *Reasons* of my two Books, which you *generally take for none*, to *be no sound Reasons*; nor to believe Mr. *Danvers his Books* not to be such a *bundle of most gross mistakes and Untruths*, as I scarce ever before met with, from a professed Christian. If I mistake, it is not in my power to do otherwise, were I to die this hour. And if I have offended the Anabaptists by a faithful perswading them to *Repent* of the doleful work which they have made in *England*, my Conscience more accuseth me for doing it *no more*, than for doing so much. If you take all men for as bad as you describe me, that *wish your Repentance* for *such works*, and also for our *woful Church Divisions*, and *differ from you about Infant-Baptism*, and that yet beg for *mutual forbearance*, and *peaceable Communion with you*, I am not of *your spirit or mind*, *and hope neither to live nor die in so narrow a Communion*.

As for any more Answering any of you, those that I converse with, tell me it is needless; I repent that I have been drawn by Contenders so often to interrupt more useful work. If more be needful, let them do it that have leisure, and longer life.

You say, that *It is now a common question whether ever I will die a Martyr?*

I am sorry that your Acquaintance are hardened, and used to questions that so little concern them, and that are so unmeet for their Determination: If Suffering be the best State, how happy hath this Kingdom

been made by the OVERTURNERS? Do you mean that you doubt whether ever the Anabaptists will have Power enough to effect it? they attempting what they did against me too late, just when they and their Co-partners were a pulling down themselves and others? Or do you mean, that till we are Martyred we are not capable of your good Opinion? (And are all the Anabaptists Graceless that are yet Unmartyred? Or have more Anabaptists than Pœdobaptists been Martyred in our times?) Or is it only your Prognostick on supposition of my Tryal? I have more cause to distrust my self, and beg Gods strengthning Grace, than boastingly to foretel, *Though all men deny thee, yet I will not.*] But your talk of [*my flight, and others suffering by proxie for me*] doth but shew that you have not that care of avoiding Falshoods in matter of Fact, which might invite us to think that you are liker than others to be sound in Doctrine. But had you not mistaken, yet I might have admonished you, not to have condemned every Anabaptist that hath taken a grosser *flight*, than a sick mans going for his health into the Countrey, when he had neither any *Flock*, nor *Undertaking*, nor *Call* to hinder him: At least that you mock not at *Paul* for being let down by the wall in a Basket, nor at Christ for his flight into *Ægypt*, or withdrawing into *the Wilderness*, and *into Gallilee*, &c. nor for saying, *When they persecute you in one City, flee to another*: or at least pass no hard sentence on your self for being yet alive; no nor on Mr. *Tombes* for *Writing against Separation*, and for *Communion with* the *Parish Churches*.

But in the end you [*Beseech me in the Bowels of Jesus Christ, and as I will shortly answer at the great and dreadful Tribunal that among my* other *Errata, I would repent of that absurd and Heretical position, of a Baptismal*

tiſmal Covenant of Grace running in a Fleſhly Line.

Anſw. But 1. Juſt thus the Quakers dreadfully adjure me to repent of all that's againſt *their way*; and muſt I therefore do it? And yet Mr. *Hicks*, *Ives*, and other Anabaptiſts treat them far more ſharply than ever I did the Anabaptiſts.

2. I have ſo many years looked for my appearing at the Tribunal of Chriſt, that if I ſhould not be true to that Light which doth appear to me, I were more unexcuſable than yet you think me. But will *your word* at that Tribunal paſs *for Law*, or for *my Juſtification*, if I ſhould contradict the Grace and Covenant of God, and his Church Laws and ſtate from the dayes of *Adam* to this day? How ſhall I be ſure that *it is* the *Bowels of Chriſt*, and not *Self-conceitedneſs*, and the *Zeal of a dividing Sect*, in which you make this earneſt ſute to me?

3. Eſpecially when you ſo unintelligibly recite my ſuppoſed Errour, and give me not a word of Anſwer againſt that abundance of Scripture proof which I have brought? This is too unſatisfactory an anſwering of Books, to *Beſeech us to repent of them?*

4. *The Wiſdom from above is Pure, & Peaceable, and without Partiality.* Is yours ſo? Ask any Impartial man whether you write like one that knoweth himſelf? You here call us to Repent of a Poſition as *Abſurd and Heretical*? Did I ever call *your Opinion Heretical.* Not that I remember? Such writing as this of mine is *fiery*; but your *large Invectives* without one word of proof, and your charge of an *Heretical Poſition*, is nothing but *Chriſtian Gentleneſs.*

Your Phraſe of *a Covenant running in a Fleſhly Line*, is *your own.* The *words* of a *poſition* charged as *heretical*, ſhould have been truly recited. Tell me where I ever uſed ſuch. I refer you to my late two *Diſputa-*

tions of Original Sin, beſides my two Books of Baptiſm, for full proof that God hath taken the Children of the Godly and the Wicked as participants, into Promiſes of Love and Mercy, and threatnings of puniſhment, with their Parents: *How far*, I have there opened. Your telling me that ſuch Reference is to ſet you the task of *Syſiphus*, ſhall not ſo befool me as to tempt me to write the ſame over again: For by the like reaſon, others of as great authority as you may call me to write it twenty times. And if I give neer thirty Scripture Teſtimonies or Arguments for our Infant Mercies, we that ſee no reaſon to invalidate them, will not ſo deſpiſe God and his Laws and Benefits, as to deny or reject all, becauſe ſuch a man as you require it, and tells us that they are all invalid. If we muſt take our *Faith on Truſt*: it were more excuſable to take it from Councils, than from you.

I have told you my judgment herein ſo often, that it is the more diſingenuous in you to give it in ſuch ſenſeleſs or ambiguous words, as [*A Baptiſmal Covenant running in a Fleſhly Line.*] *Gods Covenant as Inſtituted, runs* no where; but is recorded in the *Scripture*, *Preached*, and Miniſterially applyed by his Miniſters. *Mans Covenanting Act*, is abſurdly ſaid to [*run in a Fleſhly Line.*] But men that *have Fleſh* as well as *Souls*, do *accept Gods Covenant*, and enter *themſelves* and *Infants* in the mutual Covenant by dedicating both to God. *Natural Generation* (communicating *eſſence*) maketh your Children to be *naturally yours*, which is ſo *neer an intereſt*, that *Original Sin* and *ſuffering* tells us that God eſteemeth not our *Children naturally guiltleſs* of the Parents Crimes: And he hath provided a *Remedy* for both, and not for the *Parents* or *Adult only*: And the Remedy is a *pardoning ſaving Covenant* procured by a Mediator. This Covenant is

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Universal to the Adult, as offered on the condition of Believing acceptance: And is there *no Promise*, *no Covenant* for *Infants?* Why so? Have they no *need of Pardon*, and a *Saviour?* or are they left *remediless* as the Devils? Or is the *Promise* of their Salvation *without any Condition?* If so, is it *to all*, or to *some* only? if *to all*, and so *all are Christs members*, then all (*Turks* and *Pagans*) Children should be Church-members. This were to make it run *unto a Fleshly Line* indeed? If not *to all*, to *whom*, or to *how many?* Is it to more than twenty in the world? or more to Christians Children than others? If it be a *Promise* of *Pardon* and *Life*, and neither tell to *how many*, nor *to whom*; 1. This is a strange Promise, and is no *mutual Covenant?* Shew us where in Scripture we may find it? 2. This then must be *another Species* of a Covenant of Grace, distinct from the Baptismal Covenant; and to feign and add a *second sort of Covenant* is another kind of adding to the Word of God, than adding of Ceremonies is. And who can say in all the world, that *any Child of his* hath any part in such a Promise? or that Pagans have not as much of it as Christians? All Promises of Pardon to the *Adult* are *conditional*, and *some means* for certain Title is prescribed? Is there *no means* for the certain pardon of our Infants?

2. But if you will say that it is *conditional*, *what is that Condition?* That which I have still said is this, The Condition is, that *they be the Children of the Faithful dedicated to God:* not meerly that they be our *Fleshly Line*; that doth but make *them ours*, and (with Gods Law) enable and oblige us to *dedicate* them in Covenant to him: But being thus *in our power*, and *our Wills* for them as *their own*, it is *our dedicating them to God*, that is the *immediate Condition*: And every true Christian doth *dedicate himself*, *and his Children to God*,

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as far as he thinks himself enabled: This *dedication* is *virtually* in our *own actual sanctification*, and *actually* when we have *Children*, which is *solemnized in Baptism*. What we devote to God by his Will he doth accept: And we can shew his Promises to the Seed of his Servants, and will not plead against our Mercies. Should we Apostatize our selves, the Mercies promised to the generations of them that love God, would be intercepted, and would not run to a *Fleshly Line*: But an *Infant by Believers dedicated to God*, is not *unclean* but *holy*, and so better than a meer *Fleshly Line*. To pour out your Clamours against our *Proof, full and plain Proof*, of this, from the whole current of the Scripture, and to vaunt, and talk with such Confidence as you do in the dark, as if all this were un-proved, (and the very second Commandment were again cast out, and Gods own Proclamation of his Name, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7.) and to call for more Answers, while you cry out of too much; and to talk against *dictating*, while you thus obtrude your *Quaker-like Oratory*, Contempt, & Obtestations, instead of Argument and Answers; this must not make us unthankful Despisers of the Promises of God. If you would thus Hector men out of their *Inheritances*, or the title of their Infants to them, few would think you argued cogently: And should the words of such self-conceited singular persons, which we take to be against the scope of Scripture, and consent of Christs Church, make us give up all Infants Covenant-title to Church-membership, Pardon and Salvation? You read frequently in the Gazetts, that many set so much by their Dogs, as to cry them about, and offer great rewards to those that find them, and will bring them home; And shall all Christians set so little by their *Children* (and so by all *our own Infant Priviledges*) as

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to be hector'd out of our *hopes*, and renounce their *great and precious Promiſes*, which number them with the *houſhold* of God: and that by ſuch Rhetorical Canting as a man of equal wit may uſe, in almoſt any other Controverſie?

As *Cicero* wondered at them that pleaded againſt the *immortality of the Soul*, that ever men would be ſuch enemies to themſelves, as to ſtudy for reaſons againſt their own intereſt and hopes; ſo I ſay, Though our meer Intereſt prove nothing to be true, it tells us, what we ſhould *deſire*; and when we find *Gods word* ſo excellently ſuited to *our Intereſt*, let them diſpute againſt it that will, for I will not. Let the Enemies of mankind or of Chriſtians, plead againſt the Intereſt of mankind and of Chriſtians, and not themſelves.

It's an unavoidable ſtreight that we are in, between them that ſilence and ruine us in this world, among ſuch other things, for not profeſſing our *Aſſent*, that [*It is certain by the Word of God, that Infants Baptized* (none in the world excepted) *and dying before actual ſin, are certainly* Saved,] not allowing us to preach Chriſts Goſpel if we cannot ſay that all *This is certain*; (were it *Faith in Chriſt himſelf*, the *weak in Faith* ſhould be received;) and *ſuch as you* on the other ſide, that account us even *Heretical* if we will not be ſo unthankful to God, as to deny and reject the *precious Covenat Hopes*, and *Church-relation* of our Children. You know that with what meaſure you mete it is meaſured to you again by many; and that no ſmall number of Chriſtians have numbred Anabaptiſts with Hereticks; and yet I that have dealt otherwiſe with you, am your moſt *fiery Adverſary*? And why? Any judicious By-ſtander may ſee, though *you cannot*: juſt as as *W. Pen* lately ſeemed to think more favourably of me than of others, till in an open diſpute I had detected

tected the evil of his cause; and then [*he had rather be a* Socrates *at judgment, than such a nominal Christian as I:* so you and your Brethren that are like you, because a Book or two of mine have cross'd the Interest of your Party, think I deserve all that you pronounce of or against me; so powerful is Interest with most mens understandings: so far as it is your *mistake of the Interest of Christ* that does mislead you, I easily bear it as the infirmity of a weak and prejudiced judgment: But so far as it is the interest of *your Party* which is abused against the publick interest of Christs Church it is *selfish*, and such as is described at large in *James* 3.

As for your talk of Mr. *Danvers* his words against my *Heterodoxes in other matters*, and your supercilious insulting as if he were *unanswered*, I say, 1. I take him to be *fully answered*, and if *you do not*, that proveth it not to be as you affirm. 2. What more should I answer? What doth he but recite some scrap of my words? Had he done it *truly* and *fully*, had that been any Argument against them? Do I need to answer my *own words*, before any Charge against them be proved, or proof once attempted? Was it not enough for me to lay down the *Contraries* to my Doctrines, and leave the Reader to choose which he seeth best? Dare you not *own the Contraries*, and yet continue your accusation of *my words*? Would not the World (whom I blame not if they think that I have written too many Books already) condemn me for a fool indeed, if in the condition that I am in, the Cant of such men as he and you, should draw me to write another Volumn in Defence of a Volumn that defendeth it self to all judicious Impartial Readers, and that against one that *proveth nothing* in it to be Erronious?

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And as for thoſe that will not *impartially peruſe the words* accuſed, I have no reaſon to think that they will make any better uſe of a *Defence* if I ſhould write it? And as I am paſt doubt that Mr. *D*'s Quarrels, and your Juſtification of them, are the effect of *meer ignorance, ſelf-conceit, partiality*, and *Paſſion*; ſo if *you* prove to be the *knowing men*, and *I* the *ignorant*, I am ſure it is not through my neglect of Study, nor unwillingneſs to know or own the Truth: And I have no cauſe to envy you the felicity of your greater Wiſdom. But if it be a Wiſdom that tendeth to *bitter ſtrife* and to *confuſion*, and deſtroyeth your Love to thoſe that differ from you, I will remember that my *peace* lyeth more on my Love to you, than on yours or any mans elſe to me.

As for your talk about my words in my firſt book that ſome *did then Baptize naked*, I have given you a true anſwer. To contradict what I ſaid, were to lie: I *know* not that you Baptize any at all but by report of others; and ſo I heard that then of ſome ſo credibly as that I am not able now becauſe you call for proof almoſt thirty years after, to disbelieve it: I undertake not to *prove it now*; (nor that the *Quakers* then uſed to Quake or Vomit, ſeeing now no ſuch thing is ſeen among them:) If really it was a miſreport, and never any Baptized naked in *England*, nor in other Lands, I wiſh that no man may believe it. But did Mr. *Danvers* take this for ſo heynous an injury, and yet himſelf in 2 Books labour to prove, that *for many hundred years Baptizing naked was the ordinary Cuſtome!* O how far will partiality blind men? Was it the Cuſtome of all the Churches, and yet a Reproach to be retracted, to ſay that at one time divers did ſo, if fame, not then denyed by any of thoſe Anabaptiſts that I converſt with, may be believed?

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To concludé, Sir, The importunity of Mr. *Danvers* and you have not been unprofitable to me: It hath cauſed me, as you deſired, to Review my old thoughts of Infants Church-memberſhip and Baptiſm, and to renew my thanks to the God of Mercy, who hath not left all the *World* in their Infancy unredeemed, nor without a Promiſe or Covenant of Grace; nor left Chriſtian Parents to mourn for their dead Infants, as thoſe that are without hope of their Salvation, and have no Promiſe on which to ground their hope: It hath renewed my ſenſe of the great obligation that lyeth on believing Parents, both of gratitude to God, and duty for their Children: It tells me that they may now love their Children, as the members of the Church of Chriſt, and need not, nay muſt not take them as members of the Kingdom of the Devil; nor yet ſtretch their Brains to prove that there is a middle Region (like *Purgatory*, or *Limbus Infantum* hereafter) between the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the Kingdom of the Devil; And that it is a ſad employment for Parents to diſpute their own Children out of the Bleſſings of Gods Covenant, and to prove them to be in Satans Kingdom, and not in Chriſts: Yea it hath reminded me how much the Intereſt of Infants in their Parents caſe is founded by God in nature it ſelf, and to bleſs God for that inſcription in Stone of the ſecond Commandment, and that marvellous voice from Heaven, *Exod.* 34.6,7. I believe that the Synod of *Dort* ſaid truly, *Acts* 1. 17. that Faithful Parents need not doubt of the Election and Salvation of their Children dying in Infancy, (before the violation of the Baptiſmal Covenant.)

And ſeeing God hath pronounced our Children *holy*, and not unclean, and told us that *of ſuch is the Kingdom of God*, it remindeth me how careful Parents ſhould

ſhould be, as thankfully to dedicate them to God, ſo carefully to educate them according to their Covenant, remembering that as the Parents Conſent and dedication of them to God, is the Condition of their firſt right to the Covenant benefits, ſo thoſe Parents do *Promiſe* their pious education; and if they after prove falſe in ſuch Promiſes on their part, they muſt not charge God with unfaithfulneſs, if it go worſe with their Children than on ſuppoſition of the Parents fidelity it had done; (though ſtill at age they may be accepted upon Repentance and perſonal Belief:) Of which Mr. *Whiſton* hath written more judiciouſly than any on that point that I remember.

Alſo I have been hereby made thankful that God kept me from the ſnare of Anabaptiſtry; for though I lay not ſo much as ſome do on the *meer outward act or water of Baptiſm*, believing that our *heart conſent and dedication* qualifieth Infants for a *Covenant Right* before *actual Baptiſm* (which yet is Chriſts regular ſolemnization and inveſtiture,) yet I make a great matter of the main Controverſie, notwithſtanding that I *hereticate* not the Anabaptiſts for the bare opinion ſake, nor would have them perſecuted; for now I better ſee than ever what God hath thus preſerved me from.

1. How much elſe might I have been led to, that tendeth towards the *denying the Kingdom of Chriſt*, and denying *him to be the Saviour of the world*; yea how neer might I have been led towards the making him to be the *Deſtroyer, or Abaddon*, as comeing into the World to *condemn the world*, and to take *from them the Promiſes and Hopes of Salvation*: For, 1. I find that *all are loſt in Adam*, and that *God made an Univerſal Covenant of Grace* with fallen mankind in *Adam* after his fall, and renewed it with *Noah*; I find that

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it is but a ſmall part of the world that had the *Law of Moſes*, the Jews being to the earth, but as one Village to *England*; and to be King but of a *Village* is not to be King of *England*. I find that the making of *Abraham's* or *Moſes* his Covenant was *no repeal* of the *Univerſal Law of Grace*; nor put them into a worſe condition than he found them in. And I find that paſt all doubt Infants were Church-members, and in the Covenant before Chriſts Incarnation, not only the Circumciſed but the Uncircumciſed Females, and all the Uncircumciſed Males in the Wilderneſs, yea and out of the Jewiſh Nation, as well as in it, (though the Covenant of *Peculiarity* was proper to them.)

And yet notwithſtanding all this, I find, 1. that many now do exclude all the world out of Chriſts Kingdom before his Incarnation, except the Jews, or at leaſt a few rare individuals more, when *Abraham* hoped there had been fifty Righteous in *Sodome*. 2. That the ſame men ſuppoſe that ſince Chriſts Incarnation, the old Law of Grace made to mankind in *Adam* and *Noah*, is repealed, and they that cannot have the Goſpel are left under the meer Law of Innocency or none. 3. And that *all mankind* in their *Infant ſtate* is put or left out of the Church of Chriſt, and the Covenant of Life.

And had I been ſeduced into all this, 1. To hold that for 4000 years Chriſt had a Kingdom no bigger than *England*. 2. That he came to deprive all the world that have not his Goſpel, of the former Law of Grace that was made to them. 3. And that he came to caſt out of their Church-ſtate, or Covenant-mercies *all mankind while they are Infants*; and to leave us no hope that is grounded on his Covenant or Promiſe of any Infants Salvation, or any deſcription or condition whatſoever: Alas, what ſhould I have been led

led to? and what guilt againſt Chriſt, and of furthering Infidelity, ſhould I have incurred, under the pretenſe of promoting the purity of his Kingdom?

II. And if God had thus left me, I had been likely (as I ſee by others) to have gone yet farther, and narrowed the Goſpel Church it ſelf ſo much, as to have confined it to the Anabaptiſts; or to have thought all the reſt of the Chriſtian world uncapable of Church Communion; I might have come to revile the Doctrine of Gods gracious Promiſe or Covenant to our Children, as *Abſurd* and *Heretical*; and when Gratitude is the complexion of Goſpel obedience, this *Ingratitude* might have been mine.

III. And then I ſhould likely have been left to a proud over-valuing of my own Opinion, and the ſingularity of my Wiſdom and Integrity, as quite beyond all the Chriſtian worlds that differ from me: And out of a ſelfiſh unobſerved adherence to my own conceits, to have magnified the Sect that was of my own mind, above all others.

IV. And then I might have been ſeduced to have had a hand in all the Turnings and Overturnings, ſetting up and pulling down, Praying and Unpraying, Owning and Diſowning, Bloody dayes and Thankſgivings for them, that were ſince *Triplo Heaths-Parliament* till 1660. and more than ſo, to have juſtified them in others, yea and that after Gods moſt remarkable diſowning them; yea and to have abhorred and derided the very name and motion of *Repentance* for them, and to have deſpiſed the Religious Retreat of *Nath. Ward*, a wiſe though jocular Interpendent, though *Repentance* be the only *Plank* after Shipwrack, and the great and merciful conceſſion of the Goſpel.

V. I might have been drawn hereby to divide Chriſts Kingdom, and to ſet up Antichurches, whoſe

employment ſhould be to cry down others, and draw men into odious thoughts of one another, and to deſtroy Chriſtian Love and Concord in the world.

VI. And hereby I might have been one that prepared Profeſſors to turn Quakers, Seekers, or Ranters, to have finiſhed the work that I began.

VII. I might have been tempted to do all this as in the *Name of Chriſt*, and for his *Truth*, *Word* and *Church*; and ſo to have entitled God to all, and put his holy Name to theſe works of Darkneſs, and pretended his own Commiſſion for my oppoſing him.

VIII. I might have been tempted hereby to write Letters as long and vehement as yours, in as oratorical and pious a ſtrain, which ſhould have been but the birth of my ignorance and ſelf-conceit, and made up of Hypocriſie; all along pretending that I am *offended* with my Adverſary for *want of an Anſwer* or *proof*, when indeed it were the *ſucceſs of his Anſwers* & *Cogent Proofs*, prevailing with multitudes againſt my Opinion, that was the true cauſe of my anger: and when partiality had filled my heart with bitterneſs againſt my Brother for ſuch ſucceſs, I might have been drawn to cover all from my ſelf and others, by accuſing him of *fieryneſs or folly* in generals, and by ſummoning him to Repentance and *Recantation*, as the Quakers do, by the *dreadful Tribunal of God*, when I cannot reſiſt the Scripture evidence which he bringeth.

IX. And I might have been tempted when once Prepoſſeſſion, Prejudice & Intereſt of Reputation had engaged me to ſo bad a cauſe, to have ſtudyed all that I can rake together to maintain it; and to have ſtretch'd all my wits to have oppoſed all that is brought againſt it, and to have made it the chief *work and Religion of my life*, in which my thoughts, affections, time and induſtry ſhould be laid out to carry on this

this miſtaken and deſtructive cauſe, and to keep the Churches of Chriſt from Loving-Unity, Communion and Peace, till they will all unite againſt *Infants Church-memberſhip and Baptiſm*, which they never did, nor never will do: Yea, and I muſt have taught all Chriſtian Parents, that though they muſt love their Children as they are *their own*, (as Heathens do) yet that they muſt not *Love any one Infant* in the world, as a *Member of Chriſt*, or *of his Church*, and *in his Covenant*.

X. And by all this, what a *Scandal* ſhould I have given to the *Atheiſts*, *Infidels*, *Papiſts and Profane*, to harden them in their Contempt of Godlineſs, and Deriſion, or Accuſations of Religious men; as if all ſerious Religion among us were but Pride, Contention, Humour and Hypocriſie, and a Cloak for our Malaaies and Crimes. Yea I might have tempted them to Perſecution, and quieted their Conſciences in *ſilencing Chriſts Miniſters*, for the ſake of ſuch, whom they think they uſe not ſo ill as they deſerve.

XI. And alaſs what a diſtraction and ſcandal ſhould I have cauſed to the ignorant and weak, when they ſee ſo *many wayes*, and hear men calling them *this way* and *that way*, and terrifying them with Gods Judgment, and the charge of Sin, if they be not of *this mind or of that*, till poor people (that have a plain Rule left them by Chriſt) are driven out of all Religion, or out of their Wits, as not knowing of what ſide and way to be.

XII. And I ſhould have been like enough to have been drawn into the *guilt of Perſecution* my ſelf, while I cryed out againſt Perſecution. I might have *Perſecuted* my Brethren with my Tongue, and thought it neceſſary to the promoting of the cauſe of God, to blaſt their juſt Reputation, and to make them by falſhoods

to become despised, lest their names should hinder my design. Yea, who knows but I might my self have joyned with those whom you judged the persecuting Silencers of the Ministers of Christ, and Ruiners of the Churches Peace, by endeavouring the continuance of those *same Impositions*, and *keeping Ministers out of the publick Ministry*, and *depriving them of all the established Maintenance*, which in the judgment of the Sectaries themselves is *heynous sin*, and all this lest Repentance and Altering such Impositions (unless they will do it as far as the said persons desire) should weaken their Party, and leave them under greater disagvantages; and to have thus desired mens *impenitent Continuance* of that which is accounted *heynous Persecution* and *Devastation* of the Churches, and *starving* many *thousand Souls*, and *undoing Ministers* and their *Families*, might have made all this to be my *own* by *such consent*, yea and *endeavour*; and the pitiful shift of [*opposing a Comprehension, to keep off our own Sufferings, or our weakening, and the dividing of the Non-conformists.*] might have been an Opiate to my Conscience for so heynous an Iniquity.

XIII. Yea, who knows but I might have come to that inhumanity, and immodesty as to falsifie publick History, against the common notice of all the Learned world; and to have faced down mankind that the *Novatians* were against *Infant Baptism*, and so were the *Donatists*; and that *Austin* wrote divers Books against them, as holding that Opinion; and that the *Brittains* of old were of the same mind, and the *Waldenses* since, and *Wickliffe* also, *&c.* And if Learned men had wondred at my impudence, I might have comforted my self that my followers will believe me: yea and to have furiously calumniated those that detect my sin, and call me to Repentance, and to have reproach-

reproached them as *fooliſh and fiery* who will defend the Mercies of Chriſt, and their Iuſant hopes and title to pardon and ſalvation.

Theſe and many more evils I might have been ſeduced into, if *I* had yielded to thoſe reaſonings that would have drawn me to deny the Graces of the Covenant; and which in my youth once did cauſe ſome *doubting* in me, till *I* diligently ſtudyed the point; my ignorance of the true nature of the Covenant and Baptiſm, and the weakneſs of many Writers Arguments againſt the Anabaptiſts, being then my great Temptations.

And now, Sir, *I* thank you for calling me, *in the bowels of Chriſt, as I will anſwer it at Gods dreadful Tribunal*, to a *Review* of the *Cauſe* which *I* was drawn by your Brethren to defend: For it cauſeth me in the Review of the *Nature* and *Reaſons* of it, to renew my thankfulneſs to God for my preſervation, and that he hath made any uſe of me to vindicate his Covenant, and the Mercies given by it to mankind, and for ſaving me from this fore-deſcribed deluge; and *I* ſolemnly proteſt in his ſight, that knoweth my heart, that if *I* knew, or by ſtudy could find out that Papiſts, Conformiſts, Separatiſts, Anabaptiſts, or Quakers were in the right, *I* would quickly and joyfully declare my conſent, & be glad before *I* die, to joyn with them, and recant what I have held, or ſaid, or done againſt them. But the Reaſons which *I* have given in my two Books, and which Mr. *Joſ. Whiſton* (above moſt others) hath lately given, ſeem to me unanſwerable. And yet *I* doubt not but Mr. *Danvers* or *you* can anſwer them all; there being few Cauſes ſo clear that a man may not talk againſt, as long as his talking faculty holds out: But do not expect that *I* ſhould offend you by Replying, to words which *I*

think need no Reply, unleſs the neceſſities of ſuch as are deceived by you do require it. Bleſſed be that Mercy that will ſhortly Reconcile his dark miſtaken wrangling Children in the World of Reconciling Light and Love, in the perfect *Unity*, which Grace is now preparing us for, and they that live in Faith and Love, are breathing after: And woe to them who by dead Formalities elude and hinder mens *ſolemn intelligent owning* of their Baptiſmal Covenant at age, and thereby make Anabaptiſts, and make Infant-baptiſm ſeem a Crime.

London, Decemb. 31.
1675.

Rich. Baxter.

Mr.

Mr. Danvers *his Third Reply Conſidered, at Mr.* Hutchinſon's *Invitation.*

BEfore the Receipt of Mr. *Hutchinſons* Letter, I knew nothing of Mr. *Danvers* his Third Reply, which I have now peruſed: Though by his Concluſion one would think that he took *open Rebuke* for a tolerable, yea acceptable, friendly office; yet finding how impatiently he receiveth it, and that the detection of his Voluminous Untruths doth but occaſion him to defend them, and to ſtir up all his Forces to render the Reprover odious, and ſo doth but exaſperate his Diſeaſe, I thought my ſelf diſobliged from any farther attempts to bring him to Repentance; And thoſe that yet need more to ſave them from the belief of his Hiſtoricall Miſreports, are perſons that *I* have not leiſure enough to ſatisfie.

I again profeſs, that the experience of theſe laſt fifteen years, of the *ſtrange incredibility* of ſome men on both extreams, [the *Violent* and the *Dividing*] about *notorious matters of Fact*, hath done more to bring me to *great unbelief* of all mankind, ſo far as *I* find them pre-engaged by Contention, and by a Carnal, or a ſideing factious *Intereſt*, than all that ever *I* before had read, or heard, or ſeen: *I* ſhould once have thought that *I* had been injurious to humanity it ſelf, if *I* had thought ſuch men as *incredible* as ſome have now declared themſelves in Print to be: *I* ſcarcely

now believe any meer humane Hiſtory any farther than the *agreement* of men of *contrary minds and intereſts*, in matters of *common* and *eaſie* notice, giveth a kind of *natural evidence* to it, beyond what it borroweth from the *honeſty* of the Writer; or at leaſt farther than the footſteps of very great Candor, Conſcience and unbyaſſed impartiality ſhall ſpeak more for my belief, than the Authors moſt confident words or Oaths. And herein *modeſt men*, and *diſintereſted Peacemakers* are now believed by me, before all the greateſt, the learned'ſt, and the moſt zealous Contenders in the world. *Davids* ſaying, that *All men are Lyars*, and *Pauls* [*Let God be true, and every man a Lyar*,] were too much overlooked by me, till *men themſelves* had told me what they are; and warned me to ceaſe from man, as vanity.

Mr. *Danvers* his accuſations were partly of ſuch *publick parties* (the *ancient Churches*, the *Novatians*, the *Donatiſts*, the old *Brittains*, the *Waldenſes*, the *Wickliffians*, &c.) and partly of ſuch publick *Writings* (as *Auguſtines* and many others) as one would think any Scholar that will read the cited Books might ſoon ſee whether he or *I* be the falſifyer, eſpecially about a practical matter, in which their Judgments could not eaſily be hid from all the Adverſaries about them, no more than from thoſe of their own mind and way.

His accuſation of the *Novatians* he neither *defendeth* (that *I* ſee) nor *confeſſeth to be a* ſlander; but ſilently paſſeth all the matter by.

His Accuſation (for ſuch it is) of the reſt (for the moſt part at leaſt) he ſtill defendeth. He cannot Repent of it; and *I* can no more believe him when *I* have read the Books that are our Records, than *I* can if he would as fiercely contend, that the Biſhops, or

Church

Church of *England* are Anabaptiſts, becauſe of his accuſation of the now Biſhop of *Lincoln*. But ſhould *I* be ſo injurious to the Reader and my ſelf as to caſt away precious time in again and again anſwering his untrue Citations and expoſitions of words which are before our eyes? and which neither his *word* or *mine* can ſatisfie any Reader of, who muſt know the truth by the Books themſelves! when he tells men of my writing for Popery, Conformity, *&c.* can his *yea* or my *nay* go for proof with any that is in doubt which of us ſaith true? Muſt not the peruſal of the full words decide the Caſe? And ſo it muſt as to his Accuſations of the ſeveral Churches and Parties in queſtions: And if his Believers would be perſwaded that the *Welſh* Tongue is the common Language of *England*, if he do but vehemently affirm it, and revile ſuch as contradict him, *I* could not help it, nor muſt *I* write books about it, as long as he hath leiſure, Ink and Paper to hold on. His Exclamations of the unſatisfactories of theſe general anſwers, (or refuſals) ſhall not tempt me to caſt away the little relicts of my time, in *numbring* and *diſproving* all the *Untruths* that he hath written, and will write. By what Law am I condemned to ſuch a Drudgery? The very firſt Paragraph of this his third Reply hath more than one or two.

But the chief ſubſtance of his Book is his reiterated accuſation of my words in my firſt Book, that [*many* then *Baptized naked*] for which, as a heynous Calumny, I muſt Repent. Readers, my Conſcience telleth me that Repentance is ſuch an exccellent healing Duty, that I ſhall loath my ſelf ſo far as I find my ſelf unwilling of it? But is it poſſible for a man to Repent of all that the ſeveral contradicting Sects (Papiſts, Quakers, Anabaptiſts, *&c.*) call him to Repent of, when that is *beſt* with one ſide which is the

the *worſt* to divers others? We are openly agreed, 1. That the Baptizing naked is not the uſual way of the Anabaptiſts in *England*. 2. That it was not the way of the moſt of them when I wrote that book. 3. That we heard of none with us in *England* that for any conſiderable time continued it. The Queſtions remaining are 1. Whether when I wrote thoſe words, the common Fame or Report of the Countrey where I lived took it not for as *certain* that divers then in ſome places did it, as the moſt Scriptural way, as that the Quakers Quaked, and that the Ranters Swore? 2. Whether ever any Anabaptiſt that then was acquainted with me, yea or any one perſon denyed it to my hearing or knowledge? 3. Whether Mr. *Tombes* denyed it when I wrote it? All theſe I will no farther trouble the Reader about, than to tell him that he neither doth, or can diſprove me, and ſhould I *recant* what I ſaid of theſe three queſtions, I muſt tell three downright Lyes? And is that a ſafe way of Repenting? 4. But let the queſtion be whether I did *well to believe it*? I anſwer, I believed it not as a *Divine Revelation*, but as a *Humane Report*; which conſtrained a proportionable belief, which it was not in my *power* to deny? 5. But ſhould I not *yet disbelieve it?* Anſwer, I am more willing to do it than not, but I am not able: I do believe (according to the meaſure of the aforeſaid evidence) that it is a Truth? I *cannot* believe the contrary: I hear not a word to warrant me to disbelieve it: it is not in my power, and I muſt not lie, to ſay that I believe it not. 6. But the next Queſtion is, Did I not ſay *more*, or *mean* more at leaſt, than that it was but [at that time] [*the practiſe of many, but not of moſt, or their ordinary way*] and *that I knew it no otherwiſe than by uncontradicted Fame?*] Anſwer, Either *I* did *ſay or mean more*, or *I said not*. If *I* did, *I* hereby

by renounce it, and declare that I wronged them. If I did not, (as I know I did not) to say I did were to lie; and is it worthy his writing a Book to tempt a man to lie?

If he will prove that I *said more*, the *words* must decide it; if that I *meant more*, he is not to be believed of my heart, as if he knew it better than I.

But he proveth it (that *I intended them all*) contrary to my most express words. 1. He saith, it is *my scope and design?* 2. From my Arguments, which take in the whole Party? 3. From the Instance, *&c.* Reader, If I were to teach a man to understand my book, before he wrote against it, I should have some little hope of true dealing in his Report, how weak soever his Arguing were: But when I must deal with a man that understandeth not plain *English*, because partiality will not suffer him, and will *not learn* to understand what he doth not, and yet cannot forbear a publick contradicting it, till he understand it, would it not be a slavery to be tyed to write against such a man as long as he would write, should I live so long? I joyned together, as the mode of their Re-baptizing, their doing it in *cold water* or *Rivers*, *some naked*, and the rest (the usual way) *next naked*, that is, in a *linnen Shift*, or Vest, only to cover them. *I* took that which in the hotter Countreys was safe, to be in our frigid Countreys a breach of the sixth Commandment; and can prove, that he that said, [*Go learn what that meaneth, I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice*] would not have plunging over head in Cold Water, to be the ordinary way with us. *I* supposed that as among the naked *Indians*, use maketh nakedness a less provocation to Lust, than it would be here; so also in the hotter Regions, of the world, their appearing *publickly next to naked, in one linnen Vest or Shift*, was less unseemly than

than it would be here: *David* might dance ſo before Ark, though *Michel* thought it impudent; and they might uſually were ſuch Garments as would not have kept their *Nakedneſs* from *being ſeen*, if *they had gone by ſteps upon the Altar*; and ſuch as if it were but turned aſide would leave their nakedneſs as *Noah's* was to ſpectators: Cuſtome is of great ſignification in ſuch things. But *I* appeal to common Modeſty with us in *England*, whether it would not be a breach of the ſeventh Commandment to come to Church, or walk the Streets, or appear in Aſſemblies in our *Shirts* and *Smocks*? Now this man firſt feigneth me to *ſay* that *it is Adultery*, becauſe *I* ſay it is *a breach of the ſeventh Commaadment*, as if nothing but *Adultery* were there forbidden?

Next to prove that *I* mean it of them all, that [*They Baptize naked*] he alledgeth that *I* ſaid, that *all* or *moſt did it*, [*naked or next naked*] and, are theſe all one? pray doth he not diſprove himſelf? Is it not ſure that he that ſaith, [*ſome Baptize naked, and others next naked*] doth not ſay of *all* [*that they Baptize naked*] What ſhould one ſay to ſuch a man as this?

But he ſaith, that [*ſome naked and next naked are much at one.*] Anſwer, That's but another of his Untruths, from whom they flow ſo eaſily that *I* may not number them. A *groſſer* and *leſſer* breach of the ſeventh Commandment are *not much at one with me*. *I* never ſaid or thought that they were. If *I* had, is that any thing to the queſtion in hand? Can he prove that *I* ſaid [*All Baptized naked?*] if *I* had ſaid, that *I* took [*next naked*] to be as bad.

2. But *de facto*, doth *he deny* the latter? it ſeems here that he doth. I profeſs alſo that *I* go in this but by *Common Fame*. If they Baptize not next naked in one

one linnen Shift, *I* never heard it denyed till now? *I* renounce the mention of it if it be untrue; but it is not in my power to disbelieve it. But because *I* never saw it, if he will say that they Baptize them all in hats, bands and cuffs, *I* will not peremptorily deny it.

But he will prove that *I* meant not [*Common Fame*] because *I* add [*Experience*, &c.] But sure *I* never alledged *my own Experience.*] *I* never saw any of them Baptize: *I* never *heard a Ranter Blaspheme*, (though *I* have read Letters full of it;) nor *I* never saw a *Quaker quake*. If you say that they never did so, *I* will not prove it. But how shall other *mens Experiances* be known to me, but by Report or Fame? And *I* think that the more common and uncontradicted the Report is, it is the more probable.

I have not leisure to go on at this rate with such a Writer; *I* again profess that *I* had rather Retract what *I* said than not, if *I* could do it without lying, but *I* cannot. But, Reader, what's all this to the Question, Whether our Infants are in Covenant with Christ, or Visible Members of his Church? Is it not a meer Diversion?

But the last Question is, *Have I not wronged their Cause by wronging the Persons, in believing Fame, that ever any of them Baptized naked?* Answer, 1. *I* have not the books now to peruse, (men of his Spirit, though of another Opinion, have disabled me at this time from confuting him by books.) But *I* am past doubt, that *I* have read of their Baptizing naked in forreign Writers.

2. But, Reader, Could one that had read this Book of his against me, for this passage as injurious, believe if he had not seen his other Books, that it is this *same man himself, who in his two former Books* maintaineth it against us, that for many hundred years,

Baptizing

Baptizing naked was the Churches Practiſe? Was this no injury? Or ſhall the ſame man take me as injurious for believing the ſame of *ſome of them* for a very little time? *I* hope *I* have almoſt done with ſuch Diſputers

As to what he ſaith of Mr. *Lambes* and Mr. *Allens.* (*who have left them,*) *exceedingly as he hears, blaming me for broaching, much more for defending this ſlander.*] *I* anſwer, 1. His *Hereſay's* have quite loſt their credit with me: *I* believe it never the more for his hearing it: They never *blamed me to my face:* and *I* think that they are men likely to do it in that friendly way, if any way; and therefore at leaſt *I* may hear from them hereafter; and if ſo, their reproof ſhall be willingly conſidered. If it be true, *I* ſuppoſe it is, becauſe they have miſtaken me as he doth, as if *I* had ſpoken that of their ordinary practice, which *I* mentioned only as the practice of ſome only at that time; which was as ſhort and confined as the Quakers quaking. 2. Is it a ſlander of Mr. *Tombes* his citing *Voſſius,* or of *Voſſius* cited by him, to ſay that ſome Baptized naked in former times? 3. Is it then no ſlander of Mr. *Danvers* to ſay, and ſtiffly defend it, that the ancient Churches ordinarily did ſo? Doth he who ſo pleadeth for Immerſion, becauſe it was the firſt way, now take it for well done in the ancient Churches, and an intollerable ſlander that it ſhould be ſaid to have been done of any of late?

He next cometh to defend his falſe Report of a Paper which *I* read to ſome people that *I* preached to: The firſt hour that ever *I* ſpake to them, *I* openly profeſſed that we met not there as ſeparating from the publick Aſſemblies, but for the neceſſary inſtructing of the people, who elſe had none, nor any publick Worſhip of God: The Pariſh of *Giles* where *I* lived,

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and the Parish of *Martins* where *I* preached are supposed to have 1000000. souls or neer: of these it is supposed that not above 60000. can hear in the Parish Churches at the most (and the incumbent of one had not officiated at all for many years:) it grieved me to think that while the King maintaineth a Corporation and Revenew for propagating the Gospel in *America*, and the Jesuites are justly praised for doing so much to propagate it in the *East Indies*, we should sluggishly suffer *America* and the *Indies* to come so neer *Whitehall*, and so famous and Religious a City as this, to be (to so great a number) without any publick worship of God, while Mahometans are not quite without. Therefore to my great cost I preached neer a year over the Market-house at St. *James*'s. And when the Informers began with me, and accused me to the Justices of meeting contrary to the Act against Conventicles, *I* gave my Reasons to some Justices, and others, in word and writing, to prove that neither I, nor such others, might be judged breakers of that Act, because we did not meet to worship God with any other manner of Worship than what is according to the Liturgy and Practice of the Church of *England*. For though we *did not so much as they*, we *did nothing but what they do*: For we did but *Read the Scriptures, Pray freely in the Pulpit, and Preach the Christian Doctrine*; and all this the Church of *England* doth: And though *I* did not read my self, but another did it, it was because *I* was not able, which if *I* were, *I* would do it. And expecting quickly to have the Cause come to a Tryal, *I* wrote the sum of this in a Paper, and read it openly, and then gave it the Clerk, that none might misreport me: And though some able and pious Lawyers that perused my large Reasons, thought that they were very useful for o-

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thers as well as me, yet the noiſe and murmuring of ſome Women firſt, and ſuch as Mr. *Danvers* after, ſent abroad my Reproaches for it through City and Countrey, with ſo many falſe additions, and ſo much diſpleaſure, as added ſomewhat to my former knowledge of the difference between *Sectarian* and *Chriſtian Zeal*. Surely theſe men do think themſelves very great haters of ſin, who would render that man odious as a heynous ſinner, who doth but ſpeak thoſe words to vindicate himſelf and others from the accuſation of Informers, which he verily believeth to be true and uſeful: when a man hath for about fourteen years, not only preached without pay, but at many ſcore pounds a year charges; when he hath never taken away one of their Communicants from any Parochial, or Non-conformiſts Church, nor meddled with either Sacrament, nor ever ſet up his own preaching againſt theirs, but deſired to preach to a few of thoſe many thouſands that have none at all, nor have any publick worſhip of God, no not ſo much as the reading of the Liturgy; and when for endeavouring this in languiſhing and pains, by great charge and labour, his utter ruine, if not death, ſhall be unreconcileably endeavoured by *one party*, and for *not hateing* that which is *good* in the Liturgy as much as they, or upon every ſurmiſe of a diſeaſed brain, ſhall become the common obloquy of another, (the Sectarians, and the Women that are infected by their diſeaſe:) Reader, judge whether the true belief of Gods acceptance, and better than the Hypocrites reward, be not neceſſary to keep ſuch a one from imitating *Jonas*, and quietly leaving men to their beloved ignorance and ſin? and whether, if we had not many ſoberer men between them, that are for neither of the extreams, it would not be harder preaching in *England* than in *America*? Yet

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with moſt hearty thanks to God, I muſt ſay, that notwithſtanding the oppoſition of both theſe extreams, God hath abundantly ſweetned his ſervice to me; by the ready reception and profit of ſuch people, as men ſo much labour to keep in darkneſs.

I ſpeak all this with reference to Mr. *Danvers* his following words alſo of my preaching in the Pariſh Churches.

The foreſaid paper of mine he publiſhed in his laſt Book, as matter of Accuſation; and did it, according to his cuſtome, falſely: I briefly mentioned his falſification: He now Printeth that Copy as received from his Bookſeller, in one Column, and on the other, another, called [*The Copy obtained from the Original.*] to ſhew that there is but two words difference that is, *His Copy* ſpake of my *Reading* the *Liturgy*, and mine ſpake of my *own Reading what my Aſſiſtant read* (the *Scripture*.) But 1. If this be all one with him, are we not ſo to judge of his other Expoſitions? I know one whoſe overſight in writing uſually lyeth in leaving out [*not*] and [*un-*] and what is one Syllable? The Kings Printer, who as Dr. *Heylin* ſaith, was Fined in the *Star-chamber* for Printing [*Thou ſhalt commit Adultery.*] left out but one poor Syllable. But he did not juſtifie it as Mr. *Danvers* doth. 2. If it be his excuſe to lay the Copy on his Bookſeller, may we not take it alſo for his anſwer, that all the untruths that he hath ſaid of the Novations, Donatiſts, Brittains, *Auguſtine*, &c. he had them from —— ſome body of as great authority as his Bookſeller; and then all's well. 3. But, Reader, doſt thou not expect that at leaſt he ſhould *now ſay true* after ſo much warning, and that this ſhould be a true Copy which he ſaith, without exception, is [*obtained from the Original.*] I aſſure thee on the word of a Chriſtian, it is yet ſo far from being

true, that divers lines, even a considerable part of the writing is left out. Take heed therefore to thy belief hereafter. Believe not every Spirit, nor every man that raileth at others as less wise or spiritual than he; what wonder if he untruly tell us of the opinion of whole parties, Novatians, Donatists, *&c.* and tell us of whole Books that have not one word of what he affirmeth, but somewhat for the contrary, when he will not only falsifie my own writing, even a few lines, but defend his so doing against my self that have the Copy by me, and that by a greater falshood than the first. Are this mans Citations to be credited?

Yet he goeth on and averreth that [*there is not another Syllable different*] And he will prove moreover, that *If I meet not on pretense of any Religious exercise in other manner*, &c. I must accordingly read the *Common-prayer my self*. Answer, So said the Informers, but were I at the Sessions upon my Appeal, I would be bold to deny it, and to say that he that saith but the *Lords Prayer*, doth not use another manner of Worship than the Church? and that to do less, is not to do that which is of another manner. But if I mistake in so thinking, it followeth not that I *prevaricate*, or *mean dishonestly*, as he insinuateth.

But if he want more matter of Reproach, or any such as he, I will voluntarily give him more, so careless am I of such Censures: I do therefore tell him that I am no greater an Adversary to the Liturgy than were the old Non-conformists, Mr. *Hilderham*, who perswadeth men to come to the beginning of it; Mr. *Knewstubs* that constantly read much of it; Mr. *Ball*, that wrote the Tryal of Separation; Mr. *Bradshaw*, Mr. *Paget*, Mr *Gifford*, and such others that did the like: And that, as before the Wars, when I was accounted a Non-conformist, I did (at *Bridgnorth*) usually read most

moſt of the Lords dayes part of the Liturgy, (and as in 1660. the Miniſters of *London* conſented ſo to do) ſo would I do again, on the ſame terms: And that if my Nonconformity did conſiſt only in the contrary, I ſhould have little reaſon to blame the Conformiſts for the ſharp Cenſures which they write againſt me.

He keepeth conſtantly in his way, and addeth [--*It is confidently affirmed by ſome, that Mr* B. *hath lately in* Hartfordſhire *or* Buckinghamſhire, *in order to obtain the Pulpit (where he ſeveral times Preached in publick) read the Common prayer, or at leaſt ſome part of it, out of the Service book.*]

Anſw. 1. Who is it that this man converſeth with, whoſe confident reports he publiſhed? Are his Reporters infected with his Diſeaſe? 2. Why doth he Print this confident Report if not to be believed? And if ſo, alas, will he put *no bounds* to this ſin, while he thinks that he cryeth down our ſin? I thank God for my time, ſtrength and liberty, I did preach fourteen times in ſeveral *Pariſh Churches* of thoſe Counties, after thirteen years excluſion from the Pulpits of ſuch Churches; and it is not in the power of this mans pen to make me repent of it. But in all thoſe times, I never read either one word of Common prayer, nor one Chapter or Pſalm, ſave once, when I Preached where there was no one to Read, I read the Scripture as *I* would have done at home. Will not the preſence of thouſands of witneſſes ſecure a man from the forgery of any unnamed Slanderer? No, it will not: As after our *Savoy* Conference untruths were Printed againſt me, contrary to the moſt notorious evidence of Writings and Witneſſes; ſo ſometimes where I Preach in *London*, it is not the multitude of Witneſſes that ſecureth me from the groſs falſe reports of this kind of Auditors, (who have not ſo much kindneſs for their own

ſouls as either to ſtay away, or forbear their untruths.) No wonder then if witneſſes at 26 years, or 26 miles diſtance, or neer, be no ſecurity againſt ſuch a one as Mr. *Danvers*, or his *confident* Reporters.

He adds, [*Though it is alſo ſaid that he hath obtained that publick liberty by vertue of a Licenſe he hath from the Arch Biſhop of* Canterbury: *But whether it be one formerly granted by him, when the Biſhop of* London *before the Act of Conformity, (when by the Biſhop of* Worceſter *he was Silenced in thoſe parts) or ſince is worthy inquiry?*

Anſw. It's like you have enquired, and found that it was the former; if not, *I* tell you now: But to ſome it is almoſt as hard to *believe a Truth* that is againſt their Spleen, as to *ſpeak* it.

He next ſaith, as the Expoſition of my Sufferings, [*viz. To fly from his place and Charge, if not to avoid the Croſs of Chriſt, and to ſhun a ſuffering Witneſs when ſo loudly call'd thereto*]

Anſw. 1. Did you *hear his caſe*, or do you judge before you hear it? 2. Theſe Paſſages are too conformable to the reſt. How prove you that it was *a flight?* How prove you that it was from my *Charge?* (Reader, it is fifteen years ſince *I* had *any Charge*, of any one Congregation, more than over the reſt of the Land, unleſs my dwelling made my Neighbours become my Charge? I had no Charge of any but my Family there, unleſs my great Charge in Preaching to them for nothing, and paying aſſiſtant, *&c.* and building a place in hope of more ſuch Labour, made them my Charge? And if *I* give an hundred pounds to one man, when *I* owed him no more than others, doth that make him for the future become my Charge?) And how proveth he that *I* was *lowdly called to ſuffer?* Or that it was the Croſs of Chriſt that *I avoided?* This man is againſt *diſtating!* *I* would he were more againſt untruths!

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My Sufferings have been enough to ſhew what men are that procured them, but to me ſo ſmall, that except my reſtraint from Preaching, *I* account them not worthy of the name of the *Croſs*. But yet I will hope that he will ſo far ſuſpend his Cuſtome, as not to ſay, that any Sectarian Preacher in *England*, Anabaptiſt or Separatiſt, (to go no farther) that loſt not his Life, hath *loſt more of the World*, by his *meer Non-conformity*, than I have done?

He ſends my Conſcience here to divers Scriptures, 2 *Cor.* 6.4,5,6. *Acts* 20. 11, 12, 13. *Mat.* 10. 38, 39. *John* 10.12,13. *Mat.* 23.2,3,4. I am willinger to hear theſe Texts than him. I ſuppoſe he meaneth not thoſe that I before minded Mr. *Hutchinſon* of, of Chriſts early flight into *Ægypt*, or his oft avoiding the *Jews*, in *Nazareth*, and other parts of *Galile*, the Wilderneſs, *&c*, nor his, bidding us when *Perſecuted in one City flee to another*; nor *Pauls being let down the Wall by a Basket*; nor the ſcattering of the Diſciples, by the Perſecution at *Jeruſalem*, nor *Pauls* Circumciſing *Timothy*, nor his ſhaving his Head for his Vow, nor his Appeal from the *Jews* to *Ceſar*, nor his crying out that he was a Phariſee, nor his denying that he had done any thing againſt the *Temple* or the *Law*, nor any ſuch like. And if he condemn Chriſt and *Paul* it will be no ſuffering to them.

The firſt Text tells us that *Paul* in much *Patience* bare *Afflictions*, *Neceſſities*, *Diſtreſſes*, *Stripes*, *Impriſonments*, &c. *Anſw.* What thence? Is it *Ergo R. B.* did ill to come out of the Goal when he was put in? Or that he did ill not to put himſelf in again? Did *Paul* ſin for not ſcourging and impriſoning himſelf?

The next Text ſpeaketh of *Pauls* Preaching till midnight? *Ergo R. B.* ſhould not Preach in the Summer in the Country? I deny the Conſequence. It may be he

he meant *Acts* 21. 13. *Paul was ready to be bound or die at Jerusalem!* What thence? *Ergo* he sinned in avoiding suffering oft before? Or, *Ergo R. B.* should not have gone into the Countrey either for Health or Preaching; yea if it had been in case of danger to have Preached to many instead of fewer that had often heard him? I deny the Consequence.

The next Text tells us that we must take up our Cross and follow Christ, *&c.* And what thence? *Ergo* we must *make* our own Cross, and take up that instead of Christs? Or, *Ergo*, Christ sinned in avoiding the Cross so oft before? Or, *Ergo*, *R. B.* must go into a Prison that he may give over Preaching the Gospel? I deny all these. What kin are they to the Text? Have all the Anabaptists and Separatists lived all this while in sin, that lived out of Prison? or that have had maintenance and quietness, while *R. B* hath been laid in the common Goal, and hunted by one sort, and reviled by the other? Why will not the persecution of your Pen or Tongue prove a comfortable suffering for the Truth, as well as if I pleased your Spleen in preferring a chosen Prison before a Pulpit?

The next Text tells us, that the *Hireling deserts the Sheep by fleeing.* Thus the Quakers also talk to me when they call me *Hireling.* But, Sir, I am not so *much as a Hireling?* much less the *owner* of the *Sheep?* I would I knew which of these two you judge your selves to be? for my part I am neither. Christ is the Owner? I am not so much as the Pastor of any Flock: And (that I may not discourage your contempt, I add) nor ever, that I remember, *called* to be such these 13 or 14 years: Nor have I so long taken any *Hire.* And did *Paul* flee like a *Hireling* when he went from places of less liberty to other more commodious places to Preach? Did not Pain, Weakness, and want of Mo-

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ney for ſo chargeable a work diſable me, my Conſcience would command me (by the motive of Experience) to go about Preaching from place to place, though every d g in the ſtreets where I paſs, ſhould bark nothing but [*Hireling, Hireling.*]

The laſt Text is againſt Separation ; *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes his ſeat ; all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do, but do not ye after their works, for they ſay and do not, for they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne,* &c. And what from hence ? *Ergo* I ſhould not Preach in the Pariſh Churches ? Or is it, *Ergo* I ſhould have bound *heavy burdens* for my ſelf? Or is it, that I ſhould not have made ſuch for others? This is the likeſt ſenſe ; for the beſt way of expounding Authors is by ſimilar paſſages. And were not this an untruth it would be non-conformable to the reſt aforeſaid.

" *But* (ſaith he) *is not this a ſtrange Paradoxe that he ſhould* " *ſuffer at that rate for a Non-conformiſt at* London, *and yet act the* " *part of a Conformiſt to ſo high a degree in the Country?*

Anſw. This is very conformable to the reſt. To *Preach in the Pariſh Churches* (for his ſtory of *Reading* the Common Prayer is like his Books) *is the high degree of Conformity.* This is expoſitory. I now perceive what it is in me to be [*for Conformity and againſt it, for Popery and againſt it, for Arminianiſm and againſt it,*] as he ſaith. The equivocation maketh all true. I am for the *Conformity*, and the *Popery*, and the *Arminianiſm* of *Preaching Chriſts Goſpel* in Pariſh Churches (which the Papiſts ſay they ſometime ſaid Maſs in) and for the Conformity and Popery of Infants part in the Covenant of God, for their Baptiſm, and for the reading of Gods Word, for the Creed, the Lords Prayer, and the ten Commandments; and for the Love of Brethren, and the Unity, Peace and Concord of Chriſts Church; however I be againſt that which the world commonly knoweth by the name of *Conformity* and *Popery*. O what a high degree of *Conformity* did the old Non-conformiſts exerciſe in this mans ſenſe ! I have lived long to little purpoſe if ſuch a man by the bare names of *Conformity*, *Popery*, or *Arminianiſm* can frighten me out of my *Chriſtianity*, my *Honeſty*, my *Charity*, my *Miniſtry*, and my *Wits*.

Next relating my ſtory with more caution than uſual [with an [*If I be not miſinformed* :] (O that this ſentence had been twice or thrice in every page of his Books) with ſome truth, ſome miſtake, and more omiſſion, he ſubjoyneth, that [*by Proxie* (that's his fiction) *I ſuffer Impriſonment for a Non-conformiſt in* London, *and in perſon out dot all the Non-conformiſts by his publick Preaching in the Countrey as a Conformiſt.*]

Anſw.

Answ. 1. Reader, by this you may see at what rates we Ministers must do our Masters work. Woe to us if we Preach not: And if we do, one sort Imprison us, and seek our Ruine; and the other Revile us, as if our greatest Duty were our greatest sin.

2. You see what abundance of Enemies the Preaching of the Gospel hath, when Satan can stir up such men of Zeal to take it for a Crime. *Paul* might Preach even in the Jews Synagogue: I must not in a Parish Church.

3. You see how certain it is that the two Extreams are much of the same spirit, and that they that most cry out against Persecution are oft of a persecuting mind, when such men as this would *silence* us, or have us *give over Preaching* to the multitude that most need it, as well as others. And so would the Quakers.

4. You see what they mean that cry down a *Comprehension*: They would not have us Preach in the Parish Churches to the needy multitude, unless they may have all first altered according to their desire. Thus *W Penn* called me *cruel* for *desiring a Comprehension as leaving the Quakers to the Dogs*: so that they would have us all silenced, even by those Impositions which they themselves account sinful, till they and all such have their will.

5 You see here what a *Reproach* these men would bring on *Non-conformity*, and what *strong Invitations* they give men to *Conform*, by making *Conformity* to be *Preaching in Parish Churches*.

6. Or you see what need you have instead of disputing longer with such men, to pray God to give them tenderer Consciences, that may fear to multiply Untruths, which thousands of Witnesses, (of whom some were Anabaptists and of other Sects) are ready to confute. Especially to Pray that the Churches, and the peoples souls may be delivered from such as would not only Unchurch all mankind till they come to age, but make it a sinful Conformity than to Preach the Gospel in the Parish Churches.

FINIS.